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Johanna Kinkel Rediscovered: A Modern Translation of Three Musical Texts

by

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Abstract

The following Master's thesis centers on the annotated English translations of three musical texts written by the nineteenth century German writer Johanna Kinkel, whose stories were originally published in an 1849 anthology. Kinkel was not only a writer, but also active as a composer, conductor, pianist, music teacher, as well as a revolutionary and an early women's rights activist. Despite her many achievements, she had been largely neglected until scholars such as Ruth Whittle and Debbie Pinfold felt that Kinkel's life and literary works merited a reexamination of the original sources in order to bring renewed attention to this remarkable woman. In order to foster continued awareness and understanding concerning the difficulties that Kinkel as a woman writer and artist encountered in the context of nineteenth-century society's prescribed role for women, an extensive biographical account of her life and an introduction to the translated works accompanies the three translations.

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in me and her love carried me. Above all, I thank God, who has been my steadfast source of strength and hope.

For my daughter Desirée – my most precious gift –
and in loving memory of my parents,
who would have been proud
of my achievement.

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Introduction

Despite the significant growth in recent years of interest in German women writers such as Caroline Auguste Fischer, Caroline Pichler, and Louise Dittmar, English translations of German women writers of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries generally remain relatively scarce. Even though there have been anthologies or reprints of works by various women writers and critical scholarly writings on many forgotten women authors, there still remain considerable gaps in the revitalization of many of their works. This absence of accessible English translations in the twenty-first century is in sharp contrast to what the eighteenth century observed. During that period English writers regularly produced translations, adaptations, and anthologies of German dramas and novels, an example of which is Sophie von La Roche's *History of Lady Sternheim*, which was first published in Germany in 1771, and by 1777 two separate English versions had already been published (Blackwell and Zantop 6). This unavailability of eighteenth and nineteenth-century translations by German women writers deprives the contemporary English reader of a wealth of potentially significant literary documents by women writers who had almost without exception been excluded from the literary canon.

Historically, literary distinction had always been based upon the notion of academic knowledge and achievement, and since the avenues to higher education were not open to women through much of the nineteenth century – women could not enroll in universities in Germany until 1902 – the majority of women writers, even though frustrated by societal constraints, tended to accept the cultural, ideological image of women imposed upon them. This often resulted in feelings of ambivalence subsequently mirrored in their writing – exemplified by an initial rebelliousness against societal constraints even in the venture into writing and publishing, but then capitulating and portraying their female protagonists succumbing to and accepting those constraints. Still, in response to the reservations they felt towards their culturally assigned roles, many women writers such as Caroline de la Motte Fouqué and Caroline Auguste Fischer utilized their writing to reveal and examine various social problems as well as to resolve the internal conflicts with which they struggled – conflicts such as those pertaining to gender roles, marriage and family and their creative life.

Belonging to the category of obscure or neglected German women artists and writers is Johanna Kinkel, (1810–1858), a multi-talented woman who is a relatively new discovery in the current critical discourse on nineteenth-century women's writing, yet nevertheless worthy of renewed recognition and study. Recent scholars such as Ruth-Ellen Boetcher Joeres, with her treatise on *Hans Ibeles in London*, and Ruth Whittle and Debbie Pinfold with their work, *Voices of Rebellion*, have brought this long-neglected writer back into the spotlight. Kinkel was active not only as a writer, poet, prolific letter- and essay-writer but also as a composer, conductor, pianist, music teacher, as well as a revolutionary and an early women's rights activist. In fact it is difficult to imagine how one woman, hampered by illness, marriage difficulties, divorce, four pregnancies within a short span of time, and finally living her last years of life in exile, was capable of such wide-ranging productivity.

In the nineteenth century Kinkel was more widely known for her musical rather than her literary contributions and in time proved to be one of the most productive women composers of the German romantic period. She wrote many varied and well-received works, ranging from her *Lieder*, which were admired by Schumann and given very positive reviews by the music critic Rellstab, to duets, secular cantatas, and *Liederspiele*. It was in fact her *Lieder*, "characterized by lyrical melodies, rich harmonies, the prominence of the piano, expressive piano introductions and independent vocal lines," which proved to be so popular that unauthorized versions with new English lyrics appeared in Britain (Lemke 611). This particular musical genre was deemed completely appropriate for women composers, first because it fit into a women's sphere of music making – the home – and, second, because of its relatively simple form, "it did not compete with the more complex, "masculine" genres such as sonatas or symphonies, which required the more intensive study frequently denied to women musicians" (Reich 102). Kinkel was unique among women composers of her time in that she "wrote and set texts promoting revolutionary ideals," as in her *Demokratenlied* and *Der gefangene Freischärler* (Lemke 611). Besides composing, she was also the founder and conductor of the Bonn *Gesangverein*, a mixed choral society that performed a wide variety of old and new works. Charles Dickens, in an article about Kinkel's husband published in an 1850 journal entitled *Household Words. A Weekly Journal.*, labeled her as "a fine musician and a superior pianist," and Lejeune Dirichlet, who was the husband of Rebecca Mendelssohn, wrote that Felix Mendelssohn was "ein grosser Bewunderer Ihrer Komponistionen, Ihrer ganzen Musik" (qtd. in Siegel 1: 31). The American musicologist, Alexander Wheelock Thayer, after meeting her in Bonn and having the pleasure of hearing her perform, commented that "of all the women, whom I have heard play, she approaches nearest to Clara Schumann, in power and delicacy of touch, and in the faculty of making Beethoven talk to us through his works. Chopin, too, she plays exquisitely" (69).

On the negative side, Kinkel was accused of never having wholeheartedly devoted her energies to only one particular genre and, therefore, through all the various artistic modes of expression she pursued, spreading herself too thin, the result being that she never reached her full potential as an artist (Rieger 243). In a letter to his mother, the German poet and playwright Emanuel Geibel (1815–1884) wrote of Kinkel: "Überhaupt ist das Übermaß ihr Fehler, und namentlich ist sie so reich mit Talenten begabt, daß sie in keinem Fach ein Genie ist" (qtd. in Rieger 243). This, according to Eva Rieger, was unfair criticism because, as was the case with so many women composers, girls were not allowed the same opportunities to study music and composition seriously as were boys. Therefore, women later often lacked the necessary skills and knowledge, which kept them relegated to amateur status. Even though Kinkel persisted in pursuing her dream, and eventually received professional instruction in composition in her young adult years, she was distracted and hindered from fully realizing her potential by the ill-effects from her abusive first marriage, the ensuing painful divorce proceedings, and, in her second marriage, the internal conflict between her role as wife and mother and her creative pursuits. Personally witnessing the events of the Revolution of 1848 and then forced into exile, Kinkel found "daß nach einer politischen Katastrophe Komponieren einfach nicht mehr möglich sei" (Weissweiler 218). Thayer also commented that the events associated with the Revolution "destroyed her prospects" as an artist and concluded that "her position in society has not been one to demand or allow of her becoming known as a public performer; though doubtless she might have made a name" (69).

While the compositions of Fanny Hensel and Clara Schumann have gradually been introduced into modern day concert repertoires, composers like Kinkel remain largely unknown to the public. Part of the blame for this must be placed on the lack of available and acceptable recordings. An exception to this is the 2006 recording of thirty-two of Kinkel's songs, entitled *Johanna Kinkel, An Imaginary Voyage through Europe*, performed by singer Ingrid Schmithüsen. It was not until the 1980s that research efforts were successful in bringing Kinkel out of her husband's shadow and giving her recognition for her artistic merits, particularly within the history of German romantic music and the development of the overture (Siegel 32). The general consensus among those scholars is that "her compositions and other works are deserving of wider acclaim" (Lemke 611).

In literary circles, Kinkel is known mainly for her posthumously published novel, *Hans Ibeles in London. Ein Familienbild aus dem Flüchtlingsleben*, (1860), which portrays in a semi-autobiographical fashion her family's escape from Germany and the subsequent years spent in exile in London. In the novel, Kinkel gives the reader insight into the many difficulties experienced by the newly exiled family and sheds light on the plight of political refugees coming to London after the failure of the 1848 Revolution. The novel addresses issues of class and gender, directing pointed criticism at those that live a superficial life spent in trivial pursuits. Conversely it calls rather for the discovery and development of an individual's full potential. It discusses the issues surrounding women working, in particular the limitations imposed upon women as far as choice of profession is concerned and the discrepancy in wage earnings between men and women, and it brings out the disparity between the genders on matters of education. When this novel, which "viewed aesthetically, [...] is on the whole, marvelously written, in a fluent and vivid manner, with humor and alacrity, providing considerable evidence of its author's virtuosity" (Boetcher Joeres 188), first appeared two years after Kinkel's death, it received high praise, causing the critic of the *Blätter für literarische Unterhaltung* to pronounce: "Fast möchte man meinen, so würde Goethe geschrieben haben, wenn er uns in einem Roman das londoner Leben in der letzen Hälfte des 19. Jahrhunderts zu schildern gehabt hätte" (qtd. in Boetcher Joeres 187). Yet despite such extravagant praise, the novel fell into obscurity and its author was to all intents and purposes ignored. Besides her one major fictional work Kinkel also wrote poetry (some in the Rhenisch dialect), political commentary, essays concerning issues of aesthetics in music, a scholarly essay on Chopin – which her daughter, Adele von Asten-Kinkel had published in 1902 in the *Deutsche Revue* – four unpublished papers on musical matters that she had prepared to give as lectures in London, a pedagogical work, *Acht Briefe an eine Freundin über Klavierunterricht*, which later appeared in two separate English translations, and various short stories, which together with her husband's were published in an 1849 anthology, *Gottfried und Johanna Kinkel, Erzählungen*. A significant portion of her literary activity concerns itself with the issue of women and music making in the nineteenth century, and based on her personal experience she was well qualified to comment, since she, by pursuing a serious study of music and being a woman writer "suffered with the time, fought against it, and understood it" (Siegel 2: 1). Yet for all her literary achievement, she was granted relatively little scholarly attention after her death, partly perhaps because of the tragic nature of her death and the controversy that surrounded it, as suggested by Arnold Schloenbach, who wrote:

> Ein vollständiges, nach allen Seiten hin erschöpfendes Bild der Verewigten zu geben, ist die Zeit allerdings noch nicht gekommen; die tiefe Erschütterung, die ein so furchtbares Schicksal notwendig in jeder fühlenden Brust hervorruft, schuldige Rücksicht gegen noch Lebende, Furcht, die kaum vernarbte Wunde wieder aufzureißen, diese und mancherlei andere innere und äußere Gründe machen es zurzeit noch unmöglich, ein vollständiges Lebensbild dieser Frau zu geben, die [...] jedenfalls zu den begabtesten und vorzüglichsten ihres Geschlechtes gehörte. (qtd. in Schulte 1)

Perhaps out of this deep and evidently sincere desire to protect Kinkel's memory, she was actually unwittingly pushed out of the public eye altogether. It was not until the turn of the twentieth century that she was accorded some scholarly attention, primarily from several potential biographers. Leopold Kaufmann (1821–1898), a former member of the *Maikäferbund*, the literary society that the Kinkels had established in Bonn during 1840, had intended on writing a biography on Johanna, his express purpose being: "ihre Verdienste [...] 'wieder in das Gedächtnis der Zeitgenossen zurückzurufen'" (qtd. in Schulte 2). He had Gottfried's full approval and cooperation, with Gottfried going so far as sending Kaufmann additional material, yet for unknown reasons this biography was never completed. According to Schulte, Adeline Rittershaus (1876–1924) at the University of Zurich had also planned a biography on Kinkel, but it never reached publication. J. F. Schulte finally took it upon himself to write Johanna's biography, and his effort was published in 1908, in honor of the fiftieth anniversary of Kinkel's death. His fairly extensive work gives the reader a detailed account of the circumstances surrounding Gottfried Kinkel's arrest, imprisonment, and escape during the 1848 Revolution and goes to great lengths to discuss the controversy involved in Johanna's death. Yet it makes reference to her literary achievements only in passing. Two other scholars during this time period, Ludwig Geiger and Camille Pitoullet, "spent the bulk of their energies debating whether her novel could or should be considered a „Schlüsselroman"" (Boetcher Joeres 188). Following these studies, there was not another flourish of activity until the 1930s, when a large part of Kinkel's literary estate was purchased by Bonn's University library. In general however, Kinkel most often appeared only as a footnote to her husband Gottfried's literary and political endeavors, which by all accounts was puzzling since "literary historians and critics readily concede Johanna Kinkel's superiority as a writer, as a "geistreiches Talent," to her better-known husband, who actually wrote only one work deserving of praise, his epic poem *Otto der Schütz* in 1843 (Boetcher Joeres 187). When not in the shadows of her husband, Kinkel has been studied most often in conjunction with other well-known writers such as Fanny Lewald and Malwida von Meysenbug, but rarely was she given due attention for her own individual literary accomplishments. Only in recent years did some scholars such as Whittle and Pinfold feel that Kinkel's life and literary works merited a reexamination of the original sources in order to bring renewed attention to this remarkable woman, and therefore including an extensive chapter on Kinkel in their 2005 monograph, *Voices of Rebellion*. On the other hand, Kinkel is given no acknowledgement in Todd Kontje's, *Women, the Novel, and the German Nation*, first published in 1998, nor is Kinkel mentioned in Ruth-Ellen Boetcher Joeres' publication, *Respectablility and Deviance*.

The reasons concerning the general neglect that Kinkel has suffered, range from her marital status and gender to her subject matter, as well as her political involvement. With regards to *Hans Ibeles*, Boetcher Joeres believes that because of "its subject matter and its glorification of a middle-class woman who possesses no great attributes in any traditional, literary sense of the word" it has "been labeled trivial and then relegated to the level of literature that will please the masses but should not concern any but the few literary critics who only in recent years have begun to call attention to such works" (196). Furthermore, Kinkel's gender and marital history are typically taken into account by critics, this supported by the "stubborn persistence of critics in analyzing Gottfried Kinkel, a second-rate talent at best," yet at the same time consistently referring to "Johanna Kinkel as the far better writer of the two" (Boetcher Joeres 196). Furthermore, Kinkel's artistic reputation suffered through her simultaneous involvement in politics and the arts during the Romantic era and therefore, as Fanny Lewald stated: "People forgot that she was an important poet and a great musician" (qtd. in Siegel 2: 1). Presumably the inaccessibility and availability of her musically themed literature and the lack of accessible, modern translations has contributed to the general neglect of this important artist and writer. It is for these reasons that three of Kinkel's musically themed writings, namely, *Aus dem Tagebuch eines Komponisten*, *Der Musikant*, and *Musikalische Orthodoxie* – all published in the Kinkels' anthology, *Erzählungen* – are offered here as annotated translations in the hope that this effort will further stimulate and carry forward the renewed interest in Kinkel and her literary works and to acknowledge her significance as a creative individual in her own right who struggled with strictures of the day to contribute as an artist in the fields of music and literature.

It is hoped that these translations could also serve to spark an interest and facilitate further scholarly study of her musical compositions and have additional value in light of the present interest in feminist works and women's writings of the nineteenth century in general. In order to foster an awareness and understanding concerning the difficulties that Kinkel as a woman writer and artist encountered in the context of nineteenth-century society's prescribed roles for women, an extensive biographical account of her life and an introduction to the previously three mentioned works is to follow.

A Biographical Account of Johanna Kinkel's Life

If, as Marcia Citron states in her extensive work *Gender & the Musical Canon*, encouragement of a young girl's creative talent by family, and more specifically by her mother is critical to that said girl's future development as a composer, then Johanna Kinkel certainly defied the odds (Citron 61). Although Kinkel's exact date of birth varies with scholars, according to Schulte she was born on 10 July 1810 in Bonn, a small provincial town at that time devoid of any culture in the way of serious music. Johanna Katharina Mockel was graced with an outstanding musical talent, already apparent at an early age. From whom she might have inherited her musical and literary gifts is, according to her first biographer, J. F. Schulte, uncertain, and he proposes that "geniale Menschen oft wie Meteore auftauchen, um ebenso spurlos wieder zu verschwinden" (4). Her father, Peter, who apparently did have some musical ability, possessing a fine tenor voice, was a teacher at the French Lycée in Bonn at the time of Johanna's birth, and in all probability she inherited her passion for music from him. However, according to Siegel, Johanna's mother, Maria, was an extremely practical and simple woman by nature and a devout Catholic who could not appreciate her daughter's musical talent and therefore attempted to mold and shape Johanna to fit into the prescribed model for women in nineteenth-century society – that of being fully trained in the domestic arts in order to fulfill her future role as a wife and mother (1: 31). In Kinkel's unfinished manuscript, *Musikalisches aus London*, ca. 1857–58, she wrote that her mother "tat alles, um mich von dieser musikalischen Narrheit [...] zu heilen" (qtd. in Siegel 1: 31).

Yet despite her mother's strong resistance to her proving her talent, Johanna was fortunate enough to have been given some music lessons from none other than Beethoven's first violin teacher, Anton Ries (1755–1846). Ries was so enamored of her talent that she soon became his favorite pupil and she herself wrote of her good fortune in having had Ries as her teacher, but also stated that it was no wonder:

> dass mir seit meiner Kindheit der Name Beethoven als musikalischer Gott und Rossini als Antichrist vor der Seele stand. [...] Ich versenkte mich mit Leidenschaft in das Studium der ernsten und tiefen Musik und löste mich mit Widerwillen von aller aberflächlichen Modekomposition. (qtd. in Weissweiler 219–20)

Riess quickly placed her at the directorial helm of his little *Musikalisches Kränzchen*, a music society that he had established for his most talented students, in which students met on a weekly basis and performed small ensemble pieces from operas by Mozart, Weber, Beethoven, Gluck, Spohr, and Spontini (Weissweiler 220). Her very own "Vogelkantate" for five voices with piano accompaniment, Opus 1, which she composed in celebration of the Carnival in 1829 and for performance by the music society, was later published with the aid of Anton Ries.

Feeling constrained by her life at home and the ever-present pressure to conform to what she felt was religious doctrine, Johanna had, according to J. F. Schulte, made a decision – albeit only internally – to break all ties with her parent's faith by the age of seventeen (9). Seeking to escape parental authority she entered into marriage with a Catholic book and music merchant from Cologne, Johann Paul Mathieux in the fall of 1832. There is some discrepancy as to the exact date of marriage. Schulte states that the marriage took place on 13 September 1832, but in the reference work *Women Composers: Music through the Ages* Siegel dates the marriage to 13 October 1832. Whittle and Pinfold include Johanna's personal explanation concerning her motivation for marrying Matthieux:

> Die Hoffnung, mich diesem geistigen Zwange [at home] zu entziehen, vermochte mich zum Theil zu einer Heirat, die ich [...] gegen meine Überzeugung schloß, nicht wie man ein freudiges Liebesbündes eingeht, sondern wie man zu bestimmter Zeit etwa ein Amt antritt, weil es so hergebracht. (qtd. in Whittle & Pinfold 107)

Not surprisingly, the marriage was a disaster, lasting only six months, after which she fled to her parental home, physically ill and psychologically traumatized. She felt she had been deceived by Matthieux, stating at a later date only that: "Der Bräutigam hatte mit bewußter Verstellung, als er um meine Hand warb, eine Rolle gespielt, die er unmittelbar nach der Hochzeit fallen ließ" (qtd. in Schulte 11). Schulte places part of the blame for the breakdown of the marriage on Johanna's lack of desire for performing her domestic duties, since she much preferred musical pursuits, and this aversion on her part was heightened by her husband's determination to use force in order to make his wife conform to his ideal picture of a housewife. Surprisingly, Schulte directs minimal attention to Matthieux's alleged abuse, acceding only grudgingly in a footnote that, in light of the attending physician's medical report, the allegations against Matthieux were indeed grave. In a subsequent footnote Schulte does include some of the contents of the physician's report, but, by condensing it, he further diminishes the gravity of Kinkel's marriage situation (Schulte 11–12). On the other hand, Weissweiler sheds a different light on Kinkel's situation by viewing the physician's report worthy of detailed inclusion. The report, found in the archives of Bonn's University library, is dated from 1836 and states the following:

> Frau Johanna Mathieux, geborene Mockel, habe ich in Bonn während des Frühlings und Sommers [...] 1833 behandelt. Sie litt an einer Nervenzerrüttung mit Abzehrungsfieber, veranlaßt durch Mißhandlungen vermittelst ausgesuchter Quälereyen, die sie von ihrem Mann [...] fast ununterbrochen zu erdulden hatte. Derselbe hat nähere Tatsachen, wodurch die Gesundheit seiner Frau [...] zerrüttet worden ist, in meiner Gegenwart eingestanden. Wie er nämlich durch gesundheitsverderbliche Eingriffe auf ihr Gemüth ihr alle Ruhe bei Tag und Nacht geraubt hat, wobey er gleichzeitig erklärte, daß ein friedliches Leben nur für Schwächlinge passe und daß Zank und Streit die Nerven stärke. Da er von seiner Behandlungsart nicht im Mindesten abgehen wollte, sondern erklärte, seine Maßregeln zukünftig noch zu schärfen, so habe ich der Frau Mathieux's Eltern, in deren Haus dieselbe während ihrer Krankheit gebracht worden war, erklärt, daß dieselbe unfehlbar sterben würde wenn

> sie den Mißhandlungen ihres Mannes länger ausgesetzt bliebe [...] Die Folgen des Übels der Frau Mathieux sind erst jetzt insoweit gehoben, daß sie ohne Gefahr eines Rückfalls jede Reise antreten kann. (qtd. in Weissweiler 221–22)

This testimony served to justify and later secure Johanna her divorce from Matthieux, although it was not finalized until 1840. She later stated that her story was the same as that of countless other women and the result of the conditions of women in society, the only difference being that she had had the courage to escape (www.bonn.de/stadtmuseum/ inhalte/kinkel.pdf).

Johanna resumed her activities with the musical society in Bonn in the winter of 1833 and with great zeal rehearsed entire operas or at least complete acts from Mozart's *Figaro*, *Don Giovanni*, and *Idomeneo*, as well as Gluck's *Armide* among others, with the hope of developing Bonn's musical scene (Weissweiler 222). However, after some initial success, her plan failed and, as time passed, she decided, against her parent's wishes, that she wanted to devote herself to more serious study of music. She realized that her musical training with Ries in composition, directing, and piano performance had reached its limits and made the decision to move to Berlin to study music there. In Frankfurt, she had the good fortune of being granted a formal audience with Felix Mendelssohn on 5 July 1836, arranged through his aunt, Dorothea Schlegel. After hearing her play Beethoven's Sonata in *E* Flat Major, op. 7, Mendelssohn strongly encouraged her to pursue a career in music, and he supplied her with the necessary letters of recommendation, which gave her access to teachers such as Wilhelm Taubert, who helped hone her technical skills as a pianist, and Karl Böhmer, with whom she studied composition, harmony, and counterpoint. She became friends with Bettina von Arnim and was invited to stay in her home, rent free. However, Weissweiler claims that this was not without its problems, and it was not long before Johanna moved out (224). In order to finance her stay in Berlin, she turned to teaching piano and soon had more than enough students, including von Arnim's own daughters.

Her three years in Berlin were among her most musically productive and intellectually stimulating, aided by her entry to many of the most famous salons and finest houses of Berlin. She was introduced to and formed a friendship with Mendelssohn's sisters, Fanny Hensel and Rebecca Mendelssohn Bartholdy, the latter referring to Kinkel as an "außerordentilich bedeutende Musikerin," and thereafter Johanna was invited to participate in Hensel's famous "Sonntagsmusiken," which had their beginnings in the early 1820s, where she came in contact with other celebrated and famous people, among them Franz Liszt, Clara Wieck-Schumann, the Humboldt brothers, and Heinrich Heine (Richter 26). In von Arnim's salon she came in contact with Adalbert von Chamisso, the German poet and botanist, as well as with the young poet and playwright Emanuel Geibel, who had been a former pupil of Gottfried Kinkel, studying theology with Gottfried for two semesters. Carl Friedrich Zelter's famous Berlin "Singakademie" was another vehicle of artistic expression in which she participated.

Johanna composed her first lieder, op. 6–12, in this stimulating musical environment and received glowing reviews from Robert Schumann and the important Berlin music critic Ludwig Rellstab (1799–1860), who hailed her lieder compositions as being "die eigenthümlichsten und schönsten, die ihm neuerlich vorgekommen"

(Weissweiler 224). The publication of her compositions along with her piano teaching proved her ability to be financially independent, and the positive critical reviews such as Rellstab's established her artistic reputation in Berlin. However despite much critical acclaim Kinkel did not escape the inevitable clichés applied to female artists by critics in the nineteenth century, and she took offense when a group of young critics used adjectives such as "zart" and "empfindsam" to describe her lieder and claimed that it was these qualities that served as definite indicators that the composer was a woman, as well as "clearly implying an inferior or more amateur class of musical works" (Citron 242). Kinkel wasted no time in responding to this review, and later wrote a friend telling her how she responded to the situation, stating:

> [...]einer dieses Klubs (nicht der Rezensent) schreibt mir äußerst schmeichelhafte Briefe [...] und bittet mich, als Mitarbeiterin bei einer musikalischen Beilage zu seiner Zeitung irgendeine Komposition zu liefern. Dies war für mich eine kostbare Gelegenheit, das Sanfte, Zarte dem Rezensenten einzutränken. Ich schrieb einen ganz feinen zimperlichen Brief und schickte dazu mein wildestes Trinklied für Männerchor, zu welchem ich selbst einen rechten Studententext gemacht habe. Dürfte ich doch nur die Gesichter meiner unbekannten Korrespondenten sehen, wenn die die Bescherung durchsingen. (qtd. in Weissweiler 225)

When the Mockels sent word to their daughter that Matthieux had finally agreed to a divorce, she returned to Bonn in the spring 1839 to finalize the details, hoping later to return to Berlin and continue with her musical pursuits. However, to her annoyance and dismay, the proceedings dragged on for over a year. To keep herself preoccupied during the painful divorce proceedings, exacerbated by the intolerance and gossip of Bonn's bourgeoisie – most considered Matthieux to be the innocent party – and to ward off the reported ensuing depression and suicidal thoughts, she threw herself into the reorganization of her "Gesangverein," occupying herself once again with conducting, performing, and composing. It was in this setting that she directed Mozarts *Requiem* and composed a cantata, *Hymnus in Coena Domini*, op.14, a work for four voices, chorus, and piano accompaniment, which was published in 1840. Kinkel took on music students and, following Hensel's practice, also organized morning concerts in her apartment.

Not long after her return to Bonn, she met Gottfried Kinkel, the ambitious theologian and amateur poet, who was five years her junior. He was a Protestant and engaged to his sister's sister-in-law, and the young Johanna was a Catholic and still married, which seemed to make any relationship between the two other than a purely platonic one entirely impossible. Based on their mutual interest in literature, they co-founded a literary society in the summer of 1840, which Johanna named *Der Maikäfer, eine Zeitschrift für Nicht-Philister*, and which was described as a "merry romantic circle of young poets and radicals" (Gossmann 214). The goals of this endeavor were to give all members opportunity to have their work published and as an occasion for their gatherings. The paper was circulated weekly among members, each one contributing an anecdote, article, or occasionally even a drama, culminating in the reading of that week's contributions on a prescribed evening, followed by "Spiel, Gesang und Scherz" (Schulte 19). Johanna wrote her Liederspiel, "Otto Der Schütz," for the *Maikäfer*, and the work, though never published, was performed by her "Gesangverein" in March 1842. Members of the society included the poet Alexander Kaufmann (1817–1893), the Swiss art historian Jacob Burckhardt (1818–1897), the writer Ferdinand Freiligrath (1810–1876), and poet and writer Karl Simrock (1802–1876).

It was during this period that both Johanna and Gottfried's careers as writers and poets commenced, and soon they also recognized that their feelings for each other had developed into something much deeper than friendship. Johanna's divorce from Mathieux was finalized on 1 May 1840, and on September 4 of that same year, during a canoe outing on the Rhein that almost ended in catastrophe – their canoe tipped over and Johanna, a non-swimmer, had to be rescued by Gottfried – the couple openly admitted their mutual attraction to each other. Johanna herself wrote that this was the first occasion on which they dispensed with all formal address and shared their first kiss but which also produced in her strong feelings of jealousy and extreme dislike towards Gottfried's fiancée.

Several months later Gottfried broke off his engagement to Sophie Bögehold and openly declared his love for Johanna, fully aware of the scandal and career difficulties his decision would cause him. He was eventually terminated from his position as teacher of religion at a girls' school in Bonn and as curate, and his professional path to a professorship was also blocked. However, according to Schulte: "Solche und andere Schwierigkeiten erhöhten indessen nur den Mut der Liebenden, die ihre endliche Vereinigung auf alle Fälle durchzusetzen entschlossen waren" (33). Yet Whittle and Pinfold propose that Johanna would have preferred to defy convention "and not be in an institutionally sanctioned arrangement," in light of the following statement made by Johanna: "K. aber betrachtet die Ehe als das einzige vernünftige Ziel unserer Liebe, und ich muß mich der Inkonsequenz schuldig gestehen, daß ich mich endlich auch von ihm habe überzeugen lassen" (qtd. in Whittle & Pinfold 111). She eventually did give in to his wishes, which included her conversion to Protestantism. After the legally required three year waiting period, the couple married on 22 May 1843 and moved into Gottfried's apartment in the Poppelsdorfer Schloss.

The years of courting were a happy and productive time for Johanna, as substantiated by Schulte's statement that even "Johannas dichterische Beanlagung hatte sich in dieser Zeit mächtig aufquellender Gefühle bedeutend entwickelt" (36). However, because her husband's career prospects remained bleak, Johanna felt personal pressure to contribute to the couple's finances by giving piano and voice lessons and publishing her compositions. While her husband sought to establish himself in his new career as an art historian – the position he ultimately achieved was non-stipendiary – Johanna aspired to be in her second marriage all that society had said she had failed at in her first. One friend and observer refers to Johanna as:

> das Muster einer fleißigen, tätigen, echt deutschen Frau. Für alles [...] sorgte sie, alles übersah sie, und doch hörte man bei ihr nie jenes Knarren der Räder, das auch die äußerlich bestgeregelte Wirtschaftsmaschine mitunter für dritte Personen so läßtig machen kann. (qtd. in Schulte 50)

Their four children, two boys and two girls, were all born between 1844 and 1848, and Johanna was solely responsible for their care and well-being, since family finances were insufficient for securing a maid or a governess. Johanna voiced her frustration and resentment of the fact that her musical activities were out of necessity curtailed, stating simply that "Mein Flügel dient nur noch, um Windeln darauf zu trocknen" (qtd. in Siegel 1: 32). The personal strain of various serious illnesses within the family caused her health to suffer, but even though she herself was confined to her bed for some time, she continued to exercise her mental and creative faculties by writing her novella *Musikalische Orthodoxie*. Her husband seemed unaware of Johanna's frustrations and took pride in the belief that he had provided Johanna with "die vollste Freiheit, sich fortzuentwickeln." Yet he also stated in his autobiography that: "die geregelte bürgerliche Hausführung, die Reinlichkeit und der Sinn für das Solide" seien ihr "zur anderen Natur geworden" (qtd. in Weissweiler 231). According to Whittle and Pinfold, Gottfried Kinkel's intimate friends, among them Jacob Burckhardt, "sometimes felt antagonized by his vanity and incessant need to be praised" and "were divided over his merits" (112). Apparently he was excessively conceited with regards to his talents and achievements and felt fully worthy of receiving accolades (Whittle & Pinfold 112–13). Nevertheless "as the revolutionary upheavals of 1848 spread from France to Germany and Austria" Gottfried Kinkel was one of the many "caught up in the 'maelstrom'" (Gossman 229). Whittle & Pinfold state that "the German Revolution offered his oratory abilities a platform that made him more famous than even the vainest person could possibly wish for," and this served only to strengthen Johanna's unmitigated sense of duty and loyalty towards him (113). However, the ensuing political storm brewing on the horizon and its unfolding consequences would prove to be a severe drain on Johanna's creative energies.

Carried away with the ideals of justice inherent in democracy, Gottfried optimistically threw himself into the political happenings with the hope "durch begeisterte Reden das Volk über die Forderungen der neuen Zeit zu belehren" (Schulte

62). Johanna dissolved her "Singverein" when its members were more interested in heated political debate than in singing, and the *Maikäfer* too disbanded, since the force of the political climate had crowded out all interest in literary and musical pursuits. The Kinkel home quickly became a meeting place for members of the new Democratic Party to voice their political opinions in heated discussions. Johanna was in no way indifferent to the revolutionary ideas being circulated. She had already exhibited her inclination to rebel against societal codes and parental belief systems, and this paved the way for her to give full personal support to the cries for social reform and freedom. Long before the masses rose up in rebellion, Kinkel had already put her social conscience into practice. Schulte relates that Johanna charged those students from lower income families only half of what she would charge the young daughter's from the most prominent families, even though all received identical instruction (Schulte 62).

In August of 1848, Gottfried had taken on the editorship of the *Neue Bonner Zeitung*, and Johanna served as the paper's music and drama critic. Gottfried viewed his position as editor as a good opportunity to turn the newspaper into the voice of the Democratic Party, and when Johanna's "Demokratenlied" espousing revolutionary ideals was published in the *Neue Bonner Zeitung* in December of 1848, the song's refrain with its dissentious lyrics: "Schaut ob Ihr unser Recht und unsre Wehr zerbrecht. / Heran, heran, heran Demokratie, / dran auf die rothe Monarchie!" (Kinkel 1:CD) caused a furor among Bonn society, and Johanna was once again maligned, this time as being a "bloodthirsty revolutionary," with some of her adversaries going even so far as to accuse her of being the instigator behind her husband's political fervor. Gottfried was voted in as the newly elected delegate of the district Bonn to the second Prussian chamber in

Berlin – the "lower house" of the Prussian government – on 23 February 1849. When he left for Berlin three days later, Johanna took over his editorial responsibilities at the *Neue Bonner Zeitung*. Rather than be intimidated by the governing principles of the ruling bourgeois concerning a woman's involvement in politics, she instead considered it her duty to continue where her husband left off – using the paper as a political mouthpiece for the Democratic Party. Because of her responsibility at the paper she was not in a position to accept Karl Marx's offer to work as a translator of English articles for the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*. During this year an anthology of short stories written by Gottfried and Johanna was published, in which Johanna's novella, *Musikalische Orthodoxie*, her sketch, *Aus dem Tagebuch eines Komponisten*, and *Der Musikant* appeared.

After the dissolution of the second Prussian chamber on 26 April 1849 Gottfried returned to Bonn. Even though the military had acted swiftly throughout the German states and successfully crushed the revolts, the optimistic democrats were not to be deterred from their revolutionary plans and called together a mass meeting on 10 May 1849, but the proposed plan to storm the armory in Siegburg in order to obtain the stockpiled weapons and ammunition failed, and Gottfried Kinkel and Carl Schurz immediately continued on to Baden and to the Pfalz to join with the insurgents there. Even though Gottfried's plans to participate in the revolutionary uprisings would leave Johanna with total responsibility, financial and otherwise, for their four children, the youngest not yet even a year old, she did not feel that she had the right to prevent her husband from following his political aspirations. In her *Erinnerungsblätter* she wrote with a sense of resolve:

> Kein würdiger Grund trat vor meinen forschenden Geist, der mir einen Notanker geliehen hätte, ihn an das Heimatufer zu fesseln. Muß er scheiden, dachte ich, so mag er mindestens mit Freudigkeit scheiden: sein Weib soll ihm nicht den Vermutbecher, sondern in ihren Abschiedsworten den stärkenden Wein kredenzen. (qtd. in Schulte 65)

Having taken on Gottfried's position as editor of the *Neue Bonner Zeitung* she was in a position to receive daily reports about the conflicts between the revolutionaries and the Prussian troops, and in early July she was informed that Gottfried had been taken captive. Despite the dangers of traveling during such turbulent times, nothing would deter Johanna from hastening to Karlsruhe to try to see her husband. She eventually found him in good spirits and still confident that the revolutionaries would ultimately be successful. After five days she was told by police to leave the city, and so she returned to Bonn and devoted herself fully to lobbying for her husband's release from prison. She wasted no time having petitions signed by his party followers and friends and even went so far as to write an impassioned letter to the Prussian prince's wife, for whom she had performed in Berlin. Newspapers were reporting that Gottfried would certainly be executed for his participation in the uprising, but on 6 August 1849, news broke that he had been sentenced to life imprisonment. Yet since this report had not yet been officially confirmed, Johanna was still not sure as to his fate.

Gottfried's imprisonment in Spandau brought multiple hardships upon Johanna; she was despised and became a social outcast in Bonn society, her artistic reputation ruined, which resulted in her losing many of her music students, causing further financial strain, and thereby forcing her to move back into her parent's home with her four children in tow, now forced to try to reestablish herself as a music teacher in Cologne. Despite these hardships she was selflessly devoted to her husband, and to that end she wrote him lengthy letters and sent books by Goethe and Lessing, all with the intention of keeping his spirits high and his hope alive. Gottfried was not unaware of his wife's devotion and reciprocated in a letter, saying: "Ich habe nur ein Glück in meinem furchtbar düstern Leben, in all meinen Entbehrungen unter allen Zurücksetzungen und Ungerechtigkeiten gehabt, und dies Glück warst Du!" (qtd. in Schulte 84).

In the meantime Johanna was tirelessly rallying support for her husband's situation. Both Varnhagen von Ense and a Professor Adolph Stahr published articles in Berlin's newspapers in defense of Kinkel. She was seeking witnesses for his defense and encouraging discussion among his followers as to how best they could help his case, and, despite the intense emotional drain, according to Fanny Lewald, she still took time for creative expression by writing "kleine Kanons und 'bönnsche Geschichten'" for her children (Weissweiler 232). She was initially too proud to accept financial aid and agreed to accept monetary donations only from the various committees and organizations that rallied to help Kinkel's case, when Carl Schurz, one of Gottfried's former students, shared with Johanna his plan to free her husband, which would require considerably large sums of money. Who better than Schurz to devise a daring plan, for as Schulte states: "wenn jemand den Mut und die Klugheit besaß, Kinkel zur Flucht zu verhelfen, so war es dieser junge Verehrer ihres Mannes" (88).

The exact plan of escape, which would reveal its many inherent difficulties in execution, was not made public until 1906, when Schurz wrote about it in his *Lebenserinnerungen*. But apparently, in November of 1850, a guard at the Spandau prison where Gottfried was incarcerated, was bribed, and Kinkel and Schurz escaped to Rostock and from there traveled to Edinburgh and then on to London. News of the daring escape made national headlines, and in "Berlin, the people were crying 'Long live Kinkel!' from their windows, according to Varnhagen von Ense" (Ashton 153). Fanny Lewald portrayed him as a martyr for the sake of democracy, but the British press went so far as to question whether "the Prussian Government itself might have 'connived at his escape' out of embarrassment" (Ashton 153). Almost overnight, Gottfried Kinkel became a leading national figure. Schurz in a letter, dated mid-November and addressed to his parents and sisters, wrote only briefly of the mission, saying:

> One favorable night permitted the rescue of Kinkel, and the smooth working of our arrangements hurried us quickly beyond the danger of pursuit. At the moment you are reading this the sea is bearing us to the coast of England [...]. (91)

And further on in the letter he declared his admiration for Kinkel by writing:

> Is not Kinkel a great power in the party, and a friend? Something had to be risked for him. Such bold undertakings must be judged by their results. The joy of succeeding makes superfluous an excuse for the risk. (91)

Gottfried Kinkel expressed his gratitude and life-long devotion in a letter to Christian Schurz, dated November, 1850, in which he wrote the following about Carl:

> His spirit, persistence, and resourcefulness performed a miracle, and I owe to him in the full sense the saving of my life, more endangered daily through hard usage. (Schurz 93)

Kinkel went on to say: "Carl and I will remain together for some considerable time, enjoying the hearty friendship struck up in the course of our common political activities and rendered inviolate by Carl's loyalty and my gratitude" (Schurz 94–95).

He expressed further appreciation, making sure to acknowledge his party followers, saying:

> Only when full security in England envelopes me and complete quiet of spirit returns, shall I be fully sensible of how much I have become indebted to the loyalty of my party and above all to my friend. I believe also that in freeing me he has given joy to many, many other persons besides; for aside from the democrats, many hearts, stirred by the hard and unreasonable treatment accorded me, were inwardly moved to sympathy; all of them will be grateful to Carl for what he has done in my behalf. (Schurz 95)

Finally after much uncertainty, Johanna was informed that she was to travel to Paris where her husband would meet her so that they could discuss travel arrangements to London for her and the children. In January 1851, the entire family was reunited after almost two years of separation, now forced to rebuild their lives in exile. The task at first seemed insurmountable. Illness, the struggle to find suitable and affordable housing, trying to reestablish themselves in their careers, and language difficulties for Gottfried; these were all some of the initial problems with which the Kinkel household was confronted upon their arrival in London. Schurz in a letter to his parents, dated 7 March 1851, gave credence to the Kinkels' difficulties, writing:

> As to Kinkel, his circumstances are in no respect bright. The reports of rich legacies, etc, are one and all legends. He will have to live by his pen, and will have all he can do to make a living. Then, too, his entire family lies sick in a city where living is so desperately high. He is overloaded with outside affairs and has hardly been able to think of his income-producing work. (Schurz 102)

However, in comparison to many exiles "who arrived almost penniless and with no contacts except possibly the address of a cheap German hotel in Soho in their pockets," the Kinkels had graciously been provided with letters of introduction by Lewald and Adolph Stahr, Lewald's future husband, as well as the Democratic Party who had provided them with some money, the former obtained through donations (Ashton 154). Lewald's contacts facilitated Gottfried in slowly acquiring private pupils and receiving requests as a lecturer throughout Britain, his name providing him with "invitations from the established, rich German communities in Camberwell, Manchester, and Bradford to lecture in German on art history and literature" (Ashton 155). However, even though his reputation preceded him and was useful in opening doors for him, it was also "an asset over which the various German exile groups fought" (Ashton 157). Barely settled into their home in St. John's Wood, the Kinkels were continuously inundated with pleas for assistance, financial and otherwise, and their home involuntarily became a meeting place for other Democrats living in exile. In a letter to a friend, Johanna wrote:

> Die Arbeitsamen unter den Flüchtlingen, die sich uns anvertrauen, genießen zum Teil mit von den Früchten unseres guten Namens, da wir ihnen Arbeit und Empfehlungen zu verschaffen wissen. Schon manche

> hat Kinkel zu placieren gewußt, und das Geld, das uns die Partei zur ersten Einrichtung vorschob, rouliert jetzt von neuem, teilweise als Unterstüzung, teils als Vorschub in den Händen anderer Emigranten. (Schulte 93)

Johanna, who was referred to as the "Emigrantenmutter," resented the constant intrusion into their private life and was particularly irritated by all those who hounded her husband hoping "to use his name for support for their political schemes" (Ashton 188). After several years of separation she would have preferred having her husband all to herself so that together through concentrated efforts they could achieve success in England, a country that for the most part Johanna greatly admired. On 20 July 1851 Johanna wrote Lewald:

> Wir müssen sehr tapfer arbeiten, um uns durchzuschlagen – aber wir schlagen uns durch.... Die einzige Schattenseite sind die unzähligen Besuche, die uns an der Arbeit hindern und die Kräfte aufzehren. Wir wehren uns für unsere Existenz so gut wir können. Es wird uns zwar mancher böse, weil wir die Zeit des Plauderns energisch einzudämmen streben müssen. (qtd. in Helmer 397)

While her husband established his career as a lecturer and private tutor with the hope of eventually obtaining a position as an academic at London's University, Johanna devoted herself to her family, to her home and to teaching piano and voice. In July she reported to Lewald that Gottfried had purchased an Erard grand piano for her birthday, an obvious indicator that their financial situation had improved considerably.

Unfortunately for Johanna, it was not long before her husband once again abandoned her and the children for the sake of political interests, even though this time he left unwillingly. Gottfried had came under pressure from the many exiled Democrats, including Schurz, to fulfill his "duty to capitalize on his fame by undertaking a begging tour of America to raise money for the German National Loan," especially because it was the party that had purchased his freedom for him (Ashton 159). Kinkel left for America in September of that same year and in a letter to his parents, dated 25 October 1851, Schurz wrote the following with regards to Kinkel's trip:

> The purpose of his journey is the promotion of the German national loan, which we have undertaken from London. Kinkel is now holding mass meetings in the large American cities, calling for subscriptions to the German loan and organizing the whole business on that continent. His results are colossal. (Schurz 106)

In a letter to the editor, published in the New York Times on October 14, 1851 the writer enthusiastically wrote of Kinkel:

> If anyone will succeed in impressing the people with the importance of this measure, it will be KINKEL, who, from his learning, eloquence and unassuming yet winning manners, ingratiates himself into the affections of those with whom he mingles.

Schurz also mentioned in the letter to his parents that he was "living as vice-regent" in Kinkel's house in London (106). But Johanna was upset that Schurz did not bother to take on the responsibilities that came with that role – namely that of contributing financially, the result being that once again she had to assume sole responsibility for her family. Displaying her resourcefulness, Johanna organized a singing school for youngsters, using one of her instruction books, first published in Bonn in 1849, later also published in London in 1852, entitled *Songs for Little Children*. The strain of multiple responsibilities and the constant demands from refugees, which drained her of energy and restricted her creative life, caused her to write in despair to Lewald on 25 November 1851:

> Wie es mir geht? Es könnte mir herrlich gehen, wenn ich allein für meine Angelegenheiten leben könnte. Aber unzählige Menschen nehmen mich in Anspruch für ihre Angelegenheiten. Jeder braucht vielleicht nur ein paar meiner Tage oder Stunden, hält sich daher nicht einmal zum Dank verpflichtet, meint, ich hätte das Zehnfache tun können – aber diese Tage und Stunden summieren sich zu einer Last, die meine Existenz vernichtet. Ich bin mit allen meinen Talenten lebendig begraben, nur noch eine Pflichtmaschine. (qtd. in Helmer 398)

Regarding her husband's absence Johanna wrote Lewald: "Er sehnt sich nach unserem bescheidenen Hause, nach mir, nach dem Unterricht der Kinder zurück. Aber seine Entfernung führt für mich doppelte Sorgen und Mühen herauf, und es ist gut, daß er bald wider [...] für uns selber tätig sein wird" (qtd. in Helmer 398). But her frustration with politics and its interference with the life of her family became apparent when she wrote her husband:

> Ihr Männer sprecht von der Glorie, die Rücksicht auf die Familie dem Vaterland zu opfern. Hast Du Dir auch schon einmal alle Konsequenzen ausgemalt, und weißt Du, wie eine geopferte Familie aussieht? Dann

> opfere uns einmal frisch hin, mit Bewußtsein, und denke nicht, daß es ein leerer Wortlauf sei. Das Fatum kann Dich sehr ernstlich beim Wort nehmen. (qtd. in Whittle & Pinfold 118)

Meanwhile, even though Gottfried's presence in America aroused much enthusiasm, the hoped-for outcome fell far short of the party's monetary goals and Kinkel returned to London in March 1852, embittered that he had felt pressured to go in the first place when he would have preferred to remain at home with his wife and family and could have directed his attention to "consolidating his social and economic position with his lecturing and dining out in London" (Ashton 159).

Johanna held strong opinions and beliefs regarding the education of her four children. She wanted them to attend the best schools, even though she felt that the education for boys was in general somewhat disappointing, and she was strongly convinced of the importance of a female presence in a young boy's life, telling Lewald:

> Ein weiblicher Einfluß auf Knaben ist mir fast so wichtig wie der Schulmeister selber. Ist der Junge in der besten Schule und im Hause von der Atmosphäre einer platten Weiblichkeit niedergedrückt, so geht das Anmutigste seiner Natur auf lange zugrunde. (qtd. in Schulte 101)

She was fully determined that her children's education be free of any religious influence, and to that end she planned to teach her oldest son herself, at least until he had reached the age where he could attend such a school. Johanna made sure to read to her children in German, "denn die Kinder sollten sich als Deutsche fühlen, und die deutsche Sprache sollte die Familiensprache bleiben" (Schulte 100). She also felt it was a parent's responsibility to steer each child gently to discover their own individual talents and aptitudes, and, as her daughter recalled, the children were all encouraged from an early age to keep a record of their childhood experiences and observations. Schulte states: "Gerade in bezug auf die Kindererziehung kann man Johanna als eine moderne Frau im besten Sinne bezeichnen" (103).

The demands of family and teaching left Johanna with little spare time to devote to creative pursuits, as confirmed by Gottfried's letter to Kathinka Zitz on 7 August 1852, in which he related to Zitz "that Johanna had been asked to contribute to Luise Otto's *Frauenzeitung* but will hardly be able to do so "da sie mit Haushaltung, Kindererziehung und fremdem Unterricht beschäftigt, an Schriftstellerei jetzt leider wenig denken kann" (qtd. in Whittle & Pinfold 119). Yet despite this she still managed to write and have published *Tonleitern und Solfeggien für die Altstimme*, op. 22, and *Acht Briefe an eine Freundin über Clavierunterricht*, a pedagogic work having its origins from her own ideas about teaching and which Schulte felt was still relevant for the early twentieth century. He stated that, "Frau Kinkel zeigt sich hier als ausgezeichnete Lehrerin, die eine Menge von Erfahrungen gesammelt hat, die sie praktisch zu verwerten sucht" (Schulte 106). According to Whittle and Pinfold, Johanna "had very high expectations of what she should be able to achieve and possibly many ideas for composition, but she was not able to get them down on paper owing to lack of personal space" (Whittle & Pinfold 119).

In December 1852 the couple and their children moved from their house in St. John's Wood to a larger home in London's Paddington district, this being more central and therefore a more attractive location for potential pupils and in order to distance themselves "from the time-wasting, ungrateful spongers who had attached themselves to Kinkel on his arrival" (Ashton 162). By March of 1853, as Johanna wrote a friend of her father, Gottfried had obtained a position at Hyde Park College, with additional offers from several other colleges; in fact "Kinkel seems to have taught almost exclusively girls and women at home as well as in the colleges" (Ashton 163). This was a major sore point for Johanna, who had always been insecure about her looks, so insecure in fact that during her husband's imprisonment she had considered thoughts of divorce, feeling that her lack of physical beauty would be a hindrance to him once he was again a free man. In a letter to Lewald she relates: "Sie wissen's ja, ich bin fünf Jahre älter als Kinkel, häßlich bin ich immer gewesen. Das hat mich immer geschmerzt und der Gram hat mich in Monaten um Jahrzehnte gealtert – und in all seinem Elend ist Kinkel noch so schön! So schön!" (qtd. in Helmer 394). According to Carol Diethe, writers in the nineteenth century, regardless of gender, were inclined to be brutally honest with respect to physical beauty (12). Schurz's physical description of Johanna in his Lebenserinnerungen gave credence to Johanna's own assessment of her looks, but Schurz was able to see past outward appearance and went on to describe a quality with which she unknowingly charmed and attracted people to her.

> Johanna war durchaus nicht schön. Ihre Figur war breit und platt; die Züge grob und ohne weiblichen Reiz. Aber aus ihren stahlblauen Augen strahlte eine dunkle Glut, die auf Ungewöhnliches deutete. Der Eindruck des Unschönen verschwand sofort, wenn sie zu sprechen anfing. (qtd. in Helmer 393)

Malwida von Meysenbug's description in her *Memoiren einer Idealistin* bore certain similarities, as she wrote:

> Johanna Kinkel hatte nichts in ihrem Äußeren von dem, was man gewöhnlich bei Frauen schön oder anmutig nennt;[...] aber über dem allen thronten ein paar wunderbare dunkle Augen, die von einer Welt von Geist und Empfindung zeugten, und in den reichen Modulationen ihrer tiefen, vollen Stimme tönte eine Fülle des Gefühls, so daß man unmöglich beim ersten Eindruck sagen konnte: "Wie häßlich ist diese Frau!" sondern sagen mußte: "Welch eine bedeutende Frau! Und welches Glück wird es sein, sie näher kennenzulernen!" (qtd. in Helmer 393)

In nineteenth-century culture not only was a woman's beauty a tremendous asset for her prospects for marriage, but according to Diethe "an unattractive face gave the subliminal message that a person had a bad character, whereas a pretty face spoke for itself" (12). Johanna's insecurities, expressed by jealousy, surfaced early on in her relationship with Gottfried, Johanna admitting as much when she recalled the fateful outing with Gottfried on the Rhein and her subsequent feelings towards his fiancée, saying: "Von jenem Abend an wuchs in mir Eifersucht und Haß gegen Kinkels Braut" (qtd. in Schulte 30). Those feelings of jealousy towards other women were to plague Johanna for the rest of her life, feelings perhaps not unwarranted since it was always very apparent that other women found her husband to be extremely attractive. Alexander Herzen, however, wondered how "dieser majestätische Zeuskopf auf die Schultern eines deutschen Professor greaten war" (qtd. in Helmer 394). Some friends of the couple, however, never felt there were valid reasons for Johanna's jealousy, as indicated in a letter by Schurz, in which he writes, "As far as I know, no individual ever gave cause for suspicion. The tendency towards jealousy was probably directed at everything which in any way came between her and her husband" (qtd. in Diethe 98). However in light of the contents in a letter from her husband while he was away on a lecture tour in December 1856, one can draw the conclusion that in all probability Gottfried had been unfaithful to his wife. In his letter he wrote pleadingly, "Du mein, und bleibe mein, im äußerlichen wie im vollsten und teifsten Sinne" and "So halt du denn, während ich fern bin, das Trübe, Unheimliche von deinen Gedanken fern, [...] bleibe du bei mir und den Kindern, und versichere uns das friedliche Glück, das du allein uns geben kannst" (qtd. in Whittle & Pinfold 122). Whatever the truth may be, it is known that Johanna often suffered from depression and illness with increasing frequency during her years in London, this having been exacerbated by her father's illness and subsequent death, her spouse's often lengthy periods of absence made necessary by his career, years of financial strains and her own unrealized creative dreams as an artist. She wrote Lewald in May of 1856:

> Endlich nach jahrelanger Not und Plage ist es uns gelungen, Schüler genug zu finden, um von dem Ertrag unserer Stunden die Bedürfnisse unserer Familie zu bestreiten. [...] Ich bin unterdes ganz zum Invaliden geworden. Der Arzt sagt, ich solle immer still liegen bleiben und mich so wenig wie möglich bewegen, [...] Zu solch einer Kur habe ich aber durchaus keine Zeit. [...] Ich beschränke mich auf etwa vier Stunden Unterricht, tue das Dringendste von Hausgeschäften...und lasse mich zweimal die Woche in einem Rollstuhl an die frische Luft fahren. (qtd. in Helmer 399)

In the last years prior to her death she turned her attention to research in the history of music, as indicated in a letter to Auguste Heinrich in December, 1857 in which she wrote:

> Vor Beginn der Saison hatte ich Zeit, etwas eifriger als bisher meine Studien in Musikgeschichte wieder aufzunehmen. Ich arbeite zuweilen auf dem British Museum, wo mir die erforderlichen Bücher zu Gebote stehen. [...] Ich habe ein Engagement, über Musik Vorträge zu halten, und es scheint, daß mir dies gelingt. Das macht mir Freude, weniger deshalb, weil es ein besseres Geschäft als Stundengeben ist, sondern weil ich in mir die Fähigkeit entdeckt habe, im späteren Alter noch eine ganz neue Lebenstätigkeit zu ergreifen. Ich bin überhaupt in die mir gemäßere Sphäre meiner früheren Bestrebungen nach und nach zurückgekehrt. Solange die Kinder klein waren, schien es mir eine Pflicht, alle Neigungen meines Geistes zu töten, die mich von den nächtsten Sorgen ablenken möchten. Was unter der Schneedecke gelegen, will nun plötzlich wieder hervorkeimen.... (qtd. in Schulte 110–11)

Previous to this she had also written various "articles on musical life in London, some of which were published,[…] as 'Correspondence from London' in Cotta's *Morgenblatt*" (Ashton 190), and composed a cantata for children, a comic work with political overtones, which she entitled, *Katzen-Kantate "Aus meiner Kindheit,"* also known as *Mäusekantata* and published in 1854. Johanna explained the context, saying that "Die Mäuse vertreten mehr die sozialistischen Tendenzen, und die Katzen die militärischen" (qtd. in Whittle & Pinfold 119), and she found pleasure in rehearsing the various parts of the cantata with her children – "the combination of political and musical creativity fed her vitality" (Whittle & Pinfold 119). According to an entry in her husband's diary, Kinkel completed her novel, *Hans Ibeles in London. Ein Familienbild aus dem Flüchtlingsleben* on 10 November 1858, but because of the book's strong autobiographical leanings and therefore its various characters resembling real life persons, Johanna was afraid that some would feel maligned by her portrayal of them and therefore she feared having the book published. Despite Johanna's wishes Gottfried did have *Hans Ibeles* published in 1860 two years after her death.

The news of Kinkel's death on 15 November 1858 came as a shock to all who knew her, and was fueled by rumor and insinuations. Schulte in his biography attempts to give the reader a detailed account of the events leading up to her death, the accuracy of which is unknown. According to Schulte, Johanna felt unwell and was coughing on the Sunday prior to her death. Because she had suffered from heart problems in the year previous, a physician was called in who, upon examination, dismissed any need for concern, prescribing only a day's bed rest and some medicine. Johanna apparently told her husband of the news and then went to her bedroom on the third floor of their home, accompanied by her maid, to rest. The maid left for a few short moments and when she returned found the bed empty and the window open, with Johanna's lifeless body lying on the pavement below. Gottfried was taken in for questioning but was quickly released, having fully convinced investigators of his innocence. Schulte included what Josef Joesten, one of Gottfried Kinkel's biographers, had written regarding the circumstances of Johanna's death based on a newspaper report, in a footnote, which states:

> Die Leichenschau wies eine ganz ungewöhnliche Erweiterung der rechten Herzkammer nach, und das gerichtliche Gutachten lautete dahin, daß die unglücklich Frau durch einen plötzlichen Blutandrang zum Gehirn ihre Besinnung verloren haben müßte. Daraufhin wurde das Verdikt "Temporary Insanity" gefällt. (qtd. in Schulte 116)

This verdict, however, fueled the rumors circulating that she had committed suicide as a result of jealousy over her husband's attractions to other women. Karl Marx viciously attacked Gottfried, writing to a friend: "Durch allerlei Koketterie mit ästhetischen Jüdinnen namentlich soll der süße, melodramatische Pfaffe seine Frau vermocht haben, aus dem Fenster herauszufallen und den Hals zu brechen" (qtd. in Füllner 373). However Johanna's close friends such as Malwida von Meysenbug and Fanny Lewald were satisfied with the coroner's report, fully convinced that her death had been accidental, that in Johanna's desperate attempt to get air, she had leaned out of the window too far and had fallen to her death. Ferdinand Freiligrath also wrote a friend that after he and his wife had seen Johanna's body they had become fully convinced that "dieses klare, immer und immer nach harmonischer Durchbildung ringende Leben nicht mit einer so schneidenden Dissonanz (Sie wissen welche!) endigen konnte" (qtd. in Schulte 118). Others however held Gottfried to be morally responsible for his wife's tragic death.

Johanna's funeral took place on 20 November 1858, for which Frieligrath wrote a poem, excerpted here:

> Ein Schlachtfeld auch ist das Exil,
> Auf dem bist Du gefallen,
> Im festen Aug' das eine Ziel,

> Das eine mit uns allen. (qtd. in Schulte 121)

and Malwida von Meysenbug in her *Memorien* gave a detailed account of the funeral, paying tribute to Johanna by writing:

> Wir, die wir diese Gruft umstanden, fühlten, daß auch Deutschland hier etwas Seltenes verloren hatte. Ein leuchtendes Beispiel, daß auch das Weib eine unerschrockene Kämpferin für Wahrheit und Recht und unermüdlich tätig sein kann auf den höchsten Gebieten geistigen Schaffens, dabei aber nicht nur jede Pflicht des häuslichen Lebens als Gattin und Mutter in edelster Weise erfüllen, sondern sogar für den materiellen Unterhalt der Familie mitsorgen kann. (qtd. in Schulte 119)

Some friends such as Freiligrath were surprised and critical of Kinkel's decision to publish Johanna's novel posthumously, Freiligrath stating in a letter, "Ich fürchte, er ist kein 'kluger Mann' gewesen, als er das Buch publizierte. Es wird an mancherlei Urteilen nicht fehlen.[...] Die Blätter hätten immer noch eine Zeitlang ruhen können" (qtd. in Schulte 125). But another friend by name of Rodenberg explained Gottfried's reasons for publishing *Hans Ibeles*, saying, "[Kinkel] sagte mir einmal, daß er in einer Art von Pflichterfüllung gehandelt, indem er sich nicht für befugt erachtet habe, ein von Johanna druckfertig hinterlassenes Werk zurückzuhalten" (qtd. in Schulte 126). Kinkel remarried in early 1860 and in 1866 accepted a professorship in Zurich.

Sadly, Johanna's premature death robbed the musical and literary worlds of a considerable talent, and one can only imagine what she might yet, even in the face of existing restriction, have been able to accomplish.

Introduction to Kinkel's Musically-themed Writings and the Translations

Kinkel made her literary debut with her musically-themed short stories, which, according to Linda Siegel, were completed in 1845 even though not published in the anthology *Gottfried und Johanna Kinkel, Erzählungen* until 1849. Because they are written from an early feminist perspective, her musical fiction, a genre previously popularized by E. T. A. Hoffmann, is an important addition to the corpus of the German art story from romanticism to the twenty-first century. Sigrid Nieberle describes Kinkel's stories as being "Nebenprodukte oder Ergebnis einer variantenreichen Berufstätigkeit" (Nieberle 31).

In the short, humorous sketch, *From the Diary of a Composer*, Kinkel portrays the composer as creative genius. "Genius meant divine powers of creativity and unquestionable moral authority," and "the notion of genius furnished a means of demarcating the composer from the public, the consumers of his music" (Citron 184–85). The composer in Kinkel's short sketch requires certain conditions to be met in order for his creative genius to come to fruition but when his peace is disturbed, first by a violinist who plays "all manner of caprices on his instrument" and then later by a piano-pounding amateur, the composer feels compelled to go to great lengths to silence the enemies of his creative spirit after his attempts to disregard their noise with self-discipline are ineffective. In the end, as is congruent with the composer's elevated position in the musical hierarchy, the creative needs of the composer triumph over the attempts at music making by amateurs.

The short story *The Musician* deals with the musician's status in society and the prejudices and stereotyping that a musician is forced to endure from the bourgeoisie. For added effect and to make class distinctions more pronounced, Kinkel uses the Rhenisch dialect for the conversations of those characters that harbor these prejudices and cling to incorrect stereotypes. In the end prejudices are overcome with truth and the musician obtains a semblance of equal status in society – although he gives up his modest musical activity.

While the two previously mentioned stories deal with musical themes based on male protagonists, Kinkel's novella *Musical Orthodoxy* is the most extensive and most substantive portrayal of a musically gifted female and her relationship to the prevailing conventions and discourse on music of her time, addressing a variety of musical issues. Kinkel depicts some of the difficulties that a talented pianist might encounter in her attempt to break into the serious world of music making as a career in the novella, and she concludes that ultimately one's musical achievement and reputation in society is possible only under the tutelage, guidance, and auspices of a male figure. In the form of a *Bildungs*-narrative Kinkel reflects the artistic development of a young concert pianist, Ida, who, having been orphaned, leaves her familiar surroundings to move to a larger, musical city, whereupon she catches the eye of a much older aristocrat who introduces her into society and with whom she falls passionately in love. However she soon feels stifled with the exasperating musical demands placed upon her by the count and to which she cannot resign herself, and after her relationship with him fails, Ida makes the difficult decision to leave and start a new life in yet another city known for its classical musical tradition.

It is at this point that Kinkel portrays "the transformation of the musical pietist and classicist, Ida, to whom there is no music worth performing after Beethoven, into a full-fledged romanticist" (Siegel 2: 4). This reflects Kinkel's own transformation in Berlin, "wie sie sich [...] mit Schmerzen von der ihr aneerzogenen Fixierung auf alte Musik zu lösen versuchte," because with her old teacher Ries she could not move past the bounds of Beethoven, and it was actually Mendelssohn who introduced her to the music of Chopin and that of other contemporary composers (Weissweiler 225). The novella culminates with the idealistic portrayal of the pianist happily married, integrated back into the family and society with her career as a concert pianist intact – yet all within the confines of a patriarchal society. With this conclusion Kinkel sends the reader the message that a woman of talent and giftedness can find only a semblance of harmony, which is limited at best, and that the internal conflicts with respect to a musical career and family life cannot be completely resolved.

An earlier translation of Kinkel's novella, *Musical Orthodoxy* was published in 1858 in a musical journal entitled, *Dwight's Journal of Music* – the translator identified only by his initials A. W. T. This musical journal originated in Boston and was published on a weekly basis from 1852 until March 1863, whereupon it appeared every two weeks until its demise in 1881. John Sullivan Dwight, the journal's sole editor was born in 1813 in Boston and displayed an early love for music and literature. Dwight graduated from Harvard in 1832, and subsequently went on to graduate from the Harvard Divinity School in 1836, his early passionate interests in music and literature exemplified by his thesis dissertation: "The Proper Character of Poetry and Music for Public Worship," which was published in the *Christian Examiner*, November 1836 (Waters vii). Upon graduating he began his clerical duties as an itinerant minister, not receiving his own Unitarian parish until 1849, and after only one year Dwight came to the realization that the church was not his calling, and he left the ministry altogether. He had always had a special interest in German literature, and chose in particular to translate German poetry, his *Select Minor Poems Translated from the German of Goethe and Schiller* being published in 1838, which received strong praise from the English author Thomas Carlyle.

According to Edward N. Waters the journal is a document of historical importance, which at the time was gladly welcomed by Boston's music lovers, and "occupies a unique position in American musical literature" because "no one can write a history of music in America without consulting its pages" (ix). The journal's "contents related mainly to the art of music, with occasional glances at the whole world of arts and of polite literature, indeed at everything pertaining to the cultivation of the beautiful" (ix). Dwight outlined for his readers the proposed contents of the journal and hoped to include in its pages the following: critical reviews and analyses of concerts, oratorios, and operas; notices of new music in Europe and America; noteworthy musical news amassed from various European as well as American papers; correspondence from musical persons and places; essays on musical topics; translations from the best German and French writers about music and art; occasional notices of sculpture, painting, architecture, poetry, aesthetic books, the drama, etc. and finally, original and selected poems, short tales, and anecdotes (Waters ix). Dwight was also able to gather an impressive array of contributors for his journal, among them, F.L. Ritter, W. F. Apthorp, the critic W.S.B. Mathews, and Alexander Wheelock Thayer. Even though the *Journal* was no longer published after 1881, Dwight remained active, serving as the president and librarian of the Harvard Musical Association, writing a musical history of Boston, and for six months in 1890 taking on the role of music critic for the Boston *Transcript*. After enjoying three years of retirement he died on 5 September 1893.

It is of significant interest that A. W. Thayer, the revered expert on Beethoven and the author of the three-volume scholarly biography, *The Life of Ludwig van Beethoven* – a work also published in German and translated by Hermann Deiters and still considered to be the central reference work for all other scholars – chose to translate Kinkel's *Musical Orthodoxy*, which appeared in installments in the May to June issues of *Dwight's Journal of Music* in 1858. Thayer was born in 1817, educated at Harvard, and after making a name for himself as a musicologist in America, he took his first trip to Europe in 1849 with the intention of translating Anton Schindler's biography of Beethoven into English. However after conducting two years of research in the archives in Bonn, Berlin, Prague, and Vienna, Thayer became convinced of the need to write a completely new work on Beethoven, and this was to consume his attention for the next thirty years. During his visit to Bonn he became acquainted with Johanna Kinkel, and in an article on "Madame Johanna Kinkel," appearing in *Dwight's Journal of Music*, 29 May 1858, he wrote that Kinkel "spoke English well" and that she "felt a particular interest in all Americans at that period of revolutionary feeling in Europe" (Thayer 69). He went on to state that Kinkel was a "fine writer" and that she reminded him "both in her editorial writings and in her tales and sketches of our Mrs. Child" (69). In the article Thayer wrote that he was sending for inclusion in *Dwight's Journal* his translation of Kinkel's musically themed, *Musical Orthodoxy*, which he had "long thought worth translating, not so much perhaps for the sake of 'the story,' [...] but because of its exquisitely natural pictures of life in Germany, of its conversations upon musical topics, and of the great amount of matter drawn from the authoress's own experience" (69). Thayer also went on to state that "in all that relates to the piano-forte, Mrs. Kinkel has a right to speak with authority" (69). It was with this introduction that Thayer introduced Kinkel's novella to the journal's American readers.

Though Thayer's translation is a very skillful, proficient, and relatively free of glaring errors, its style and usage are such that a modern, updated, and accessible translation is warranted. Instances where this is readily apparent are in cases where his word choice, though acceptable in the nineteenth century, leaves a different connotation in the minds of the modern reader. An example of this is Thayer's translation of the phrase, "Weil sie immer an die traute Umgebung der Verwandten und Jugendfreunde gewöhnt war," which he translates as "Having from childhood been accustomed to unrestrained intercourse with relatives and friends." The word choice of "intercourse" itself, though still defined as "communication or exchange between individuals; mutual dealings," is problematic for a North American public, and would most certainly lead to misunderstanding and possibly even mirth. Thayer relies on this word choice to denote the meaning of "conversation" numerous times throughout his translation, and with each usage it brings to mind the unintended connotation of "sexual intercourse." With his translation of the former example he is also guilty of a misplaced modifier, in as much as his version of the above sentence goes on to say "the manners and forms of the great city appeared to her indescribably cold, and the brevity, with which musical notabilities replied to her inquiries, positively frightened her." It should be mentioned that in general and in accordance with present-day rules of punctuation, his usage of it is incorrect by today's standards.

Unfortunately, Thayer does appear to have missed the meaning of the German text in the opening sentence to the work, which reads, "Besser lerne ich die F – Moll Sonate doch nicht spielen," and which Thayer incorrectly renders as, "Better after all not try to learn the F minor Sonata," and in another instance, for the German word "Scheu," in context stated, "Um Ida's willen überwand sie dießmal ihre Scheu vor der großen Gesellschaft," Thayer's word choice is "repugnance," which is a distorted rendering.

An example of a word choice that to the modern English reader would seem archaic and bring to mind a strange connotation to say the least appears in the following descriptive passage: "Er war sehr lustig in hellgrauen Stoff gekleidet," which Thayer translates as "He wore a cool summer dress of gray stuff." The German term, "Stoff" and the English "stuff" are hardly the same, and the use of the word "dress" is an example of outdated style, sure to provoke a strange mental image in the mind of the contemporary English reader.

Difficulties in translation often occur because of the differing grammatical systems between languages, these making it awkward to render a passage from one language to another without modifying it slightly for the purpose of accuracy in the target language's grammatical system. In the German text, the Count says to Ida, "Versteht denn Ihr Mund auch so zu singen, wie Ihre Finger?" In the German grammatical system this rendering works and is self-understood but in the English, the proposed equivalent, "Can your mouth sing like your fingers?" is ambiguous and a better rendering of the phrase would perhaps be, "Can you sing as beautifully as you play?"

Thayer translates "entsühnte," which appears in the first line on page 324 of Kinkel's text as "expiation of the sin" which can be misleading because the German does not talk about the action in a religious context, and the meaning in context refers more to "making peace" again with Ida's piano (Kinkel 324). To render it as Thayer did could be a risky choice, especially since Kinkel herself became an atheist sometime after her marriage to Gottfried.

Another example of an incorrect word choice, on page 331 in the last line of Kinkel's text is Thayer's rendering of the word "aufzogen" which denotes that the guests made light of her or spoke condescendingly, "pulling her leg" in the sense of colloquial English, and not, as Thayer suggests, that they "drew back from her" (Kinkel 331).

Very surprising for Thayer, who possessed a wealth of musical knowledge, is his error on page 352, where the original makes a reference to "Liebes Mandel, wo ist's Bandel," cited as an example of a trivial work by a great composer, in this case Mozart. Thayer, rather than leaving the German title as is, simply translated it as "Beloved Mandel where is Bandel," giving the reader reason to believe that the reference here is to the names of two people. This however is not at all the case. Kinkel is referring here to Mozart's comic "Bandel Terzett," K. 441 and the German term "Bandel" refers to "ribbon" and therefore the title could actually be liberally translated to mean, "Dear little husband, where's the ribbon?"

Finally, on page 339 of the Kinkel text, in the second last paragraph, last sentence, reference is made to the count, who discovers that Ida has abruptly left town, and he is left thinking: "doch hat sie eigentlich dießmal nichts ganz Verkehrtes ergriffen, wenn sie sich doch nicht in ihre gesellschaftliche Stellung fügen konnte," which Thayer translates as: "and yet upon the whole her present step is not so unwise, if she really is unable to accommodate herself to her true position." In this case the implication in the text is more a question of whether Ida actually has the ability to integrate herself into society.

As indicated by this short and selective analysis of Thayer's translation, there appear to be only occasional instances of ambiguity and poor word choices, to which all translators at times inevitably succumb, and so it is important to stress that in general Thayer's translation is often admirably adroit, especially in the context of conventional nineteenth-century speech. However, for the contemporary reader, modes of speaking have changed significantly over the past century and it is for this reason that new translations must at times be produced. The purpose of these new translations is also to awaken new interest in the original text and to modernize it while still being sensitive to its original style, capturing all that is unusual in it and in this case to society's conditions and constraints within the nineteenth century in which the author, by way of her gender, was forced to create. Ultimately, the goal in offering the following translations has been to bring the modern reader into contact with Kinkel's musically-themed texts from the nineteenth century, and thereby, also into connection with Kinkel herself, a talented but neglected author. The sentiments of Ludwig Geiger aptly express this potential connection, as he wrote, "Johanna Kinkel gehört zu den Frauen, die um so mehr gewinnen, je mehr man sich mit ihnen beschäftigt, und deren Andenken um so strahlender wird, je mehr von ihnen über sie bekannt wird" (qtd. in Schulte 3).

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From the Diary of a Composer

A Sketch

by

Johanna Kinkel

During the time when I was studying counterpoint in H., I had chosen a fairly quiet apartment close to the conservatory, and I had of course inquired beforehand whether anyone within the immediate neighborhood played a musical instrument. Everything turned out to be as I wished: the caretakers were completely non-musical, and the rooms above mine were occupied by an elderly widow who always wore felt slippers in the house.

Throughout the first month I was occupied studying the theory of intervals and chords. I was deciphering and figuring basses, and so I had quite a fair amount of work to do at my desk and actually played less often than usual. The widow in the floor above me was delighted with her quiet fellow tenant and sang my praises to the landlord as the ideal tenant. Towards April, when the windows facing the sunny garden were open, I discovered, in a somewhat removed back building that bordered my little garden from another street, a violinist who had just recently moved in, and who played all manner of caprices on his instrument.[1] Admittedly only seldom did the highest notes force their way past my closed windows, yet even these were an annoyance to my extremely sensitive ears. Anyway, at hearing a badly played violin I can never help but to imagine that the spirit of the particular cat responsible for donating its intestines to manufacture the E-string is wailing, and all for the purpose of providing pleasure to humans through its sacrificial death.

I reasoned that even if I wanted to suffer the self-imposed inconvenience of keeping the garden window closed throughout the entire summer, my neighbor would hardly consider keeping the same strict observance. And so it came down to which of us would play the other to death. In this regard I had the obvious advantage: I had my grand piano moved close to the window, and as soon as the violinist so much as raised his bow, I opened the lid, released the damper pedal, and played with the utmost exertion in another key. The violinist playing his single melody line could not compete against my full harmony, no matter how hard he endeavored to aggravate me again.

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[1] The usage of the musical term, *caprice* varied somewhat throughout the centuries, and with different composers. In the seventeenth century it commonly denoted a light, fugal composition but in its later usage it represented an instrumental piece characterized by its fanciful or humorous style and free form, or also as several variations on a theme by another composer.

He finally wrote me a polite letter, proposing that we form an alliance and arrange for a mutually agreeable time for each of us to practice undisturbed by the other. I realized that I was dealing with a rational man, and so I went over to see him and explained my dilemma to him: that even music heard from a distance would by far be more disturbing to me while in the process of having to create music, as yet non-existent, in my mind, than while actually playing existing music. I described my anguish to him: how I had often raised my pen ten times, and how his violin bow cut right through my thoughts as if it were the shears of Atropos each time I had just collected my thoughts after the last disturbance.[2]

The violinist realized that two musicians not playing the same piece and living in close proximity to one another constituted an impossible situation, and since he was renting only month to month, he moved to another district as a favor to me.

Unfortunately, in the meantime, my incessant, truly fanatical piano playing, with which I had waged war against the violinist, had aggravated the nervous headaches from which the dear widow living upstairs suffered, so that she had also given her notice to the landlords, and after the expiry of her quarterly rental period she left the rooms vacant. The various people who had taken a close look at the rooms, while each time I just happened to be playing energetically down below, explained to the landlord that they did indeed like the lodgings very much, but that they would rather not live in close proximity to a musician; even though a person loved music, it would be boring to listen to etudes all day long, because this would eventually spoil all music for the listener.

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[2] Atropos was one of the three Fates or Moirai in Greek mythology that controlled the destinies of human beings. The goddess Clotho was responsible for spinning the web of a mortal's life; Lachesis decreed the length of life and Atropos was responsible for how each mortal's life would end and for then cutting that thread of life with her "abhorred shears."

Finally a young lieutenant came; he found the rooms to be quite "magnifique," the view "superbe," and the maid "charmant". He measured the one wall in order to determine if he might be able to place his piano against it. The landlady was honest enough to ask him whether he would not find it disturbing that another piano was already being played in the room below his own: one can hear the piano almost as well through the ceiling as if one were in the very same room. The lieutenant replied with a laugh: that would not bother him one bit, on the contrary: such a fantastic musical mélange would provide endless fun for him and his comrades.

When his remarks were disclosed to me, my heart sank, because against such insensitive ears as these my weapons were ineffectual. But what was I to do? My finances did not allow for a change in accommodations, since I had paid the rent for my entire stay in advance, and in every new location I could run the risk of encountering a similar misfortune. I also did not have Spontini's resources at my disposal; he apparently provided his fellow female tenants with a free loge in the theater under the condition that they were never allowed to play piano while he was at home.[3]

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[3] Gaspare Spontini (1774–1851) was an Italian opera composer and conductor; appointed court composer to Empress Josephine in 1805, staying in that position until 1820, whereupon he left for Berlin to become the musical director and conductor of Berlin's Hofoper.

At first I tried patience. I strove to focus my mind totally. I wanted to hear nothing except my inner world of music and persuaded my senses that the lieutenant's piano playing was only mere noise and had nothing to do with music. Not only did this attempt at self-discipline fail despite my best effort, but also the strain on my nerves practically destroyed my whole being.

I now planned out a more effective schedule. In the early morning, while the lieutenant was ensconced in his feather bedding, sleeping off his heroic deeds from yesterday's soiree, I endeavored to finish off my written basso continuo assignment.

Unfortunately I never managed to get this task completed before the lieutenant awoke and started playing: "Before Romeo's Avenging Arm" or "Tremble Byzantium."[4] He spent all his free time at the piano, and in those days a lieutenant had an endless supply of leisure hours – God knows! For hours on end he played gallops, polkas, and the like, all with a raised pedal, chromatic scales in the bass clef not excluded – horribile dictu!

I decided that this was a battle of life and death!

As soon as he even touched his keyboard, I too sat down at mine, and since my piano was capable of twice as much volume as his, I could at least really annoy him. With both hands I struck multiple chords and to that added a tremolo in the deepest bass. Against that he could defend himself only by pounding the keys with twice the intensity, the result being that the tuner had to come and restring his instrument twice a week.

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[4] In the German: *Vor Romeo's Rächerarme* and *Erzittre Byzanz*. The first is from Vicenzo Bellini's opera, *I Capuleti e I Montecchi*, an opera in four parts; the libretto was written by Felice Romani and was very loosely based on Shakespeare's *Romeo and Juliet*. The second is from Gaetano Donizetti's opera, *Belisario*, an opera in three acts, its plot loosely based on the life of the renowned general, Belisarius of the sixth-century Byzantine Empire.

Even so, I suffered far more than he did. I could drown out his music only with something similar, and to have to listen to such music was simply the worst torture. The dominant volume in my favorite unassuming pieces: *Songs without Words*, the fugues and sonatas, was pianissimo and therefore insufficient to penetrate through his polkas.

But I had gained enough ground that after several weeks, my musical adversary was no longer so comfortable with these mixed harmonies in the keys of D major and C-sharp minor. The maid told me: the Herr Lieutenant had asked her whether his playing above my head did not disturb me? – I answered with feigned indifference: "As long as I play on my own instrument I cannot hear anything coming from his weak little piano."

In the meantime I had completed the double counterpoint in the "Dezima-Quinta" and I now needed to create figured movements.[5] Every undisturbed minute I sought to devote to this, but even if I sat down to work in the best frame of mind and heard the lieutenant storm up the stairs, his spurs jangling, or even if I just heard the piano chair move above my head, I was assailed as if by a fever with the thought: "Oh no, now he is going to play!" And even before he had begun, I was incapable of any work. I was ultimately provoked to anger, and while I might have ignored a barrel organ on the street, it was the lieutenant's piano playing that brought me to my wit's end. Even if I did not want to compose and was just reading the newspaper, I was still boiling with anger inside, and I was no longer the master of my own thoughts. In the end, I hated him as if he were my worst enemy and the destroyer of my entire existence.

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[5] *Decima quinta* is from the Latin, literally meaning the tenth fifth; in musical terms it indicates the interval of a fifteenth.

The constant yet futile attempts at composing, the recurring interruptions, then again the tremolo in fortissimo with which I drowned out his polkas – all this strained my nerves so profusely that even in the evenings, when my tormenter was sometimes gone, having received an invitation to tea, I could not accomplish a thing because of a headache. But most often he was at home and then five or six friends visited him, who, with piano accompaniment, bellowed out arias by Bellini and Donizetti, either in unison or even worse: bass and descant in octaves.[6] Occasionally they also practiced for their future heroic vocation by smashing furniture and dishes and letting a battle cry ring out the window into the stillness of the night.

To penetrate successfully through this chorus with a conflicting key was an endeavor to which I did not willingly want to risk the perfect pitch of my excellent instrument. Each time, I would take vengeance later for such an evening by rehearsing with the public-school children religious songs for their school exams – this from six until seven in the morning, so as to disturb the lieutenant's sleep.

He must have finally noticed that, each time, I began playing only shortly after he had seated himself at the piano and that I intentionally drowned him out. Now he became malicious. He hired the regimental bugler to accompany him. I almost thought I had been beaten and in desperation threw myself onto the sofa, plugging my ears. But the battle had now become a matter of honor. I took courage and devised a final plan.

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[6] Vicenzo Bellini (1801–1835) was a Sicilian opera composer who, in the span of only ten years composed 11 operas of which 3 are still a part of present-day opera repertoires. Gaetano Donizetti (1797–1848) was an Italian opera composer, most famous for his opera, *Lucia di Lammermoor*.

I knew of a French man who played the serpent with passion.[7] Hector Berlioz, in his treatise on the art of instrumentation, wrote among other things the following about this instrument:[8]

> Its basic barbaric sound would by far have been better suited for the customs and bloody sacrifices of the Druids than for the catholic faith, where it is still in use. An abominable relic of ignorance and of callousness, as well as of crude taste that since time immemorial governs the application of music to a worship service within our churches! The only case in which an exception must be made is where the serpent is used for requiem masses in order to multiply the agony in the "dies irae" chorale.[9] Its frosty and awful howling has without a doubt found an appropriate use in that context; in fact, it even seems that when the serpent accompanies the text, in which everything breathes the horrors of death and the vengeance of a jealous God, it encompasses a certain kind of poetic lamentation.

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[7] The *serpent* is an obsolete bass wind instrument, shaped in a serpentine form and related to the cornet. Scholars have determined that the instrument was invented in the late sixteenth century by Canon Edme Guillaume of Auxerre, France and used almost exclusively in ecclesiastical settings, more specifically to support Gregorian chant. By the eighteenth century it had also made its way to Flanders, England, and Germany, often appearing in German military bands well into the mid-nineteenth century. Consisting of an S-shaped wooden tube covered with black leather, totaling eight feet in length, and having two groups of three finger holes, the serpent was known for its power and wide dynamic range.

[8] Hector Berlioz (1803–1869), was considered to be the only great French composer of the Romantic period, yet for most of his lifetime he existed on the peripheral edge of musical acceptance, especially in his native France. Berlioz published his *Traité d' instrumentation et d'orchestration modernes* ('Treatise on Instrumentation and Orchestration') in 1843. It was the first primary essay of its kind on orchestration, and it has remained a classic work, expanded upon and revised numerous times and also translated into many other languages.

[9] The term *dies irae* is from the Latin, meaning 'day of wrath' and is a Latin hymn about the Day of Judgment, officially incorporated as part of the Roman Catholic Requiem Mass in the sixteenth century.

The instrument described above seemed to me to be perfectly suited to carrying out my plan. Regarding the choice of composition, I remembered the Flemish monk named Hucbald, who lived during the time of Henry the Fowler and who in his treatises had left behind the oldest known polyphonic compositions.[10] These rise up and down in parallel succession in intervals of perfect fifths and octaves in the "Motus rectus."[11] Actually the venerable man said of these little known melodies at that time: "Videbis nasci suavem ex hac sonorum commixtione concentum!"[12] But they have a very opposite effect on nineteenth-century musicians. I have tested them on occasion, whenever I have had guests who I felt had overstayed their welcome. As soon as I started to play the mentioned *Organum* by Hucbald they immediately walked out the door screaming.[13]

Now when the lieutenant asked the trumpeter to come, I would sneak unnoticed out of the house through the back door and would wait in a nearby coffee shop for the trumpeter to leave. Then I returned home, assuming complete naturalness, and gave the lieutenant a friendly greeting, who, leaning out of the window and believing that I had been at home, was now in shock, and became aware that he had wasted his drinking money, having hired the trumpeter for naught.

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[10] According to the Catholic Encyclopedia, the French Benedictine monk Hucbald of St. Amand (c. 840–930) was known for having developed the church's plainchant so as to include another melody line, which was specifically outlined in his treatise, *Musica enchiriadis*. Henry I, The Fowler, Duke of Saxony, in German referred to as "Heinrich der Finkler" or "Heinrich der Vogler" (876–936), is generally considered to be the first elected, medieval German king of the Ottonian or Saxon dynasty (919–1024).

[11] *Motus rectus* is Latin for 'similar motion' or 'direct motion'.

[12] The English translation reads: 'You will see a sweet harmony (lit.: "singing together") born from this mixture of sounds.'

[13] *Organum*, from the Greek, the term meaning, 'organ, instrument, tool,' was applied to the earliest forms of polyphonic compositional style, (*polyphony*, from the Greek meaning 'many voices') which consisted of a single 'plainchant' melody in one voice accompanied by at least one other voice, sung either above or below the original.

But not to lose face, I spent my money providing a substantial breakfast for the serpent player and two tuba players from the orchestra, whom I picked up at five in the morning for rehearsal every time that the lieutenant had spent a late night out dancing. We had a go at the *Organum* by Hucbald in which the long, sustained notes seemed to have been especially created for the serpent; but our concert was not without the support of locals, for all the dogs and cats in the neighborhood, even the chickens and a few donkeys that pulled the milk carts joined in rejoicing with these primeval sounds.

Three times we managed to offer the lieutenant this little morning serenade, and after the third he moved out.

The Musician

A Story of Rhenisch Bourgeois Life

by

Johanna Kinkel

In a low ceiling, dimly lit hospital room the wife of a rich beer brewer from Bonn sat upright in her bed, supported by her devoted daughter and eying with fondness a glass of vintage red Gielsdorfer wine together with some small anise slices – a refreshing change in her diet, granted her by her doctor just today. The doctor stood at the window beside her husband and answered in response to the husband's question, posed in Rhenisch dialect:[14] "Is my dear Chrissy now well on her way to recovery?" with a warning of concern sounding in his voice, saying, "First there are still some dangerous elements that must be removed from the list of symptoms before we can be certain of such a prognosis. I repeat, it is vital that the patient be removed from the stale air of an enclosed room to breathe in more of the invigorating spring air of the charming countryside."

"Fine with me. That's what she'll have. But she's not gonna go to Godesberg where the elegant ladies of Elberfeld in their stiff satin dresses promenade back and forth in front of the Hotel Blinzler. I know of a charming little house in Kessenich with a treed garden, where I could relax on cool evenings under the little trees and eat rolls and drink milk."

So the master of the household mulled things over, the doctor gave his consent, and soon, several days later, the convalescent moved out to the country with her daughter Tillie. Right behind the house they occupied, a line of orchards and meadows stretched gently uphill and bordered the woodlands that covered the rolling hills that closely encircled the village. It was here that the plump woman was now expected to spend her days diligently walking about, climbing the hill and generally tiring herself to the point where the milk and bread tasted like wine and roasted chicken to her. But she did not follow her doctor's advice with such diligence. After a half-hour stroll through the meadows, she would say to her daughter: "Till, I'm tired; I wanta rest me old bones a little bit"; and then she sat down under the shady pear tree, knitting away at a boot stocking, and paid attention to what the farmers in the adjoining gardens were doing and chatting about.

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[14] Family members speak a Rhenisch dialect for which Kinkel gives the reader, in footnotes, a High German translation in her text. Offered here are exact translations of the High German meaning with, where possible, some indication of the colloquial tone.

The next house to the right was a tavern, but as a rule it was busy only on Sundays. Then dance music, lively and wild, could be heard late into the night, while during the week the innkeepers tended to their vineyards and fields and were rarely interrupted from their work by a quiet guest who wanted to enjoy his small pint of beer in the country undisturbed.

The brewer's wife was amazed to hear someone in the garret room of a house attempting to play all sorts of pieces for entire half days on a violin, and she discovered that it was the son of the homeowners, a young man who was depicted by the neighboring farmers as a downright fool for music. They recounted the following: "There was an old violin in the house that he had discovered in the attic when he was a young boy, and in the beginning his father was pleased that his son could play the violin on his own. But as he grew up into a big lout, he no longer had any interest in doing his part to help out in the field and barn, and at any moment he would dart into the woods where no one could find him; there he would sit in a tree and play the violin. Then his father said: if that is how it's going to be then I want to profit from this, too. Every Sunday I have to pay the musicians from Bonn so much money and sing their praises.

If they're not stuffed with enough wine and buttered bread, then on top of everything, they're fussy, too. I can save myself some money here: I'll buy my youngest boy an old bass fiddle for him to saw away on. Anyone can do that. They bow four times to the right and then four times to the left and so on; Wubwubwubwub, Wubwubwubwub and on and on. It will go like clockwork. And then there's blind Michel from Dottendorf, who plays the clarinet for an apple and a slice of bread – if my oldest would play the violin, then I could have music at no additional cost to me."

So it came to be that the young Franz's hobby was tolerated. He was allowed to elude the threshing and plowing without punishment and play the violin as much as he pleased; yes, he even got his way in being allowed to take lessons for a year with the famous Wallbröl over in Poppelsdorf, and then, as best he could, he would share what he had learned with his youngest brother and blind Michel.

Until now he had played a whole assortment of cheerful little dances, providing the plump neighbor lady with much pleasure. She recalled a time in her youth when she, still slim and light on her feet, danced the quadrille. By and by the cheerful waltzes gave way to slow, melancholy melodies, and today Franz was playing music that was so mournful and sad that even Tillie gave an occasional deep sigh and furtively wiped her eyes. "I find that quite depressing," Tillie's mother said, "when a person plays so movingly; just like when an organ grinder shows up at the front door playing a street ballad about some grizzly murder case, and it's enough to bring a person to tears. I much prefer the lively little pieces." Tillie remained silent, and after a little while she disappeared in search of a solitary little spot from which she was able to look up to the garret window of the farmer's son.

For several days now she felt herself to be in such a strange mood; as if a heavy load on her chest hindered her breathing. She had come here with her dear mother, feeling so happy and free even though she felt it would be hard to miss out on the cheerful chitchat with her neighborhood friends for half the summer, and instead of the colorful hustle and bustle in the market and on the street to provide a young girl so much to fill her mind, here there was nothing to look at but grass and trees. But because she was a very good child, she had resolved that she would not allow any sign of boredom and that she would help her mother pass the time from early morning to late at night. She encouraged her mother to get some exercise so that no relapse should occur; she carefully prepared the prescribed meals and told her an endless array of stories – about Resi, about Gerti, excerpts from Parson Peter's sermon, about the Wassermeier daughters, about the fair in Endenich, and about the procession in Kevelaer. For a few weeks these topics of conversation completely sufficed, but afterwards Tillie became more and more quiet. But what at the outset she had most wanted to avoid – loneliness – she now preferred. She stole away as often as she could up the wooded mountain, or she sat by the ivy-covered wall of the churchyard contemplating for hours on end the crosses towering above the high grass.

When her father came for an occasional evening visit and she was not there or she finally appeared with her eyes swollen with tears, he would say: "What's with Tillie? Something bugging her again?"

Her mother would then reply: "Alas, you can't blame a young girl for feeling bored here, so we'd better make sure that we hurry back to Bonn." With that remark Tillie quickly found her voice again and reminded them, with the utmost passionate fervor of a concerned daughter, of the doctor's warnings, saying she did not want to hear any talk of cutting short their stay in the country.

Young Franz found himself in just as puzzling a disposition as Tillie. Until now the love for his violin had not allowed any other to arise. The young farmers' daughters in Kessenich who came to dance at the inn he had watched grow up, and he found absolutely nothing attractive about them. When he occasionally glanced over his music sheet and observed how they jumped around, he found them all one like the other, and the village boys who came to blows over the chance to dance with one girl or another he considered complete fools. Since he had an inherent, natural liking for the refined and delicate, he was more attracted to the strolling city girls who frequented another more elegant inn nearby. Yet to him these girls seemed to be more like paintings or wax figures, only to be looked at. He could not imagine having an intimate conversation, sharing his sorrows, or asking a favor of one of these girls.

On a sunny June morning he was standing at the window and heard the voices of some strangers in the garden next door; a table was moved under a pear tree, and a slim, red-cheeked young girl with satin-smooth, parted brown hair, whose thick braids seemed almost to weigh down her pretty little head, dressed in enchanting light-colored apparel, came to prepare breakfast outside. Then when her mother appeared, they started a conversation in their dialect, as is customary in a middle-class family from the Rhineland, because High German is used only to converse with proper strangers or when speaking of lofty matters. Franz's heart felt warm and full of joy as he finally for once heard such a beautiful, delicate girl speak in a manner similar to his: sincerely and simply and solely about things he too understood. The mother called her Tillie. This gave him much to think about, whether she was actually christened as Ottilia or Mathilde. He decided on Mathilde, since this name sounded lovelier than the other and not as refined.

Now his greatest delight was to observe the comings and goings of this comely figure, and soon he had imprinted her into his mind's eye so firmly that he even saw her in places where she was not actually present. As well, the sound of her clear voice remained in his ears. In the afternoons her mother took her usual little nap, while Tillie sat alone under the pear tree or strolled by the mountainside. Then Franz would call out a friendly "good day" to her from over the garden hedge, or he would meet her by the shrubs, and they would exchange a few words. Later these few words progressed into countless words, and it did not seem to matter that both would be walking on footpaths in a different direction, they inevitably met each other half way. Even when both felt fearful that others might notice and draw certain conclusions because they would stand together and chat day after day, and even when for that reason they determined with the best of intentions to pass each other by, extending only the simplest of greetings, chance would have it that just then they would deliberately spend even longer periods of time together.

The scenario usually went something like this: Tillie would walk past with a solemn face, pretending not to have noticed Franz. Then he would wrack his brains trying to imagine how he might have offended her and find no rest until just one word from her, friendlier than all other previous ones, persuaded him of the opposite. Tillie often became deathly afraid and then again so overjoyed when she thought about the look he gave her with his pitch-black eyes, so unspeakably lovely to her. At home she would dream after every encounter, thinking about how he blushed deep red when she came around the bend in the forest and how, in one leap over the brook, he stood at her side in order to bend the bows out of her way along the path; how he tossed his curly hair off his forehead, and for the first time she noticed that he was basically a truly nice person. Then she remembered every word that he had spoken to her. That he loved her had not crossed his lips, and yet it was at the heart of every conversation. He had spoken nothing but kind and sweet words to her, so how could she have said anything unfriendly in return! When she was with him she felt happy and at peace; but when alone, and even more so in the presence of her parents, she was always seized with apprehension. "How will this all end?" she asked herself, and in no way could she be satisfied with the answer: "Well, you will return home again, and everything will be as usual, and you will never see him again."

This same worry also began to well up in him. If he met her while she was alone, everything was fine, but in the presence of other people he could not even utter a single word to her or even about her. He was most afraid of her father who, dressed in his blue coat and carrying a walking stick topped by an ivory billiard ball, looked as imposing and stern as the Lord Mayor.

As much as the young people were firmly convinced that not a soul was aware of their affection, the entire neighborhood was soon aware of it all the same and spread the news. Franz's father warned him not to be turned down by a rich young girl, who surely was just stringing him along. This warning, once expressed, shook this quiet young man to the core of his being. He was convinced that she was not just stringing him along; he was well aware of how she would look up to his window for a long, long time; she had not pushed his hand away when for the first time he had boldly seized her hand

and pressed it to his heart as they parted yesterday at dusk. Yet he fully understood that this was not the final object of his desires, and his father's threat: "She'll never be your wife!" caused him to come to the instant and clear decision: "She must become your wife!"

He had just seen her walk out of the garden gate and take the path towards Dottendorf. He hurried ahead of her along the mountainside and saw her light blue dress appear and disappear between the scattered shrubbery below. Now he turned, and suddenly he stepped out in front of her just as she was turning into a little meadow closely bordered by shrubs. No strangers were anywhere in sight; the mountains rose up so close on both sides as if they wanted to make this refuge of love inaccessible to all the world.

As Franz and Tillie were standing so close to each other and looking into each other's eyes, they both broke out in tears, and they openly acknowledged to each other their desire that the world would remain forever at a distance behind the mountains and not concern itself about them and they would live by themselves in the valley and despite all deprivation be happy and content. Upon these intimate words followed the most tender-hearted kisses, and they felt as if from today on no one else on earth mattered to them and that they had always been meant for each other and must be united until death. They planned where they would meet each other again tomorrow, and the next day they met on the highest cliff, where they could look out far beyond the Rhine and the city and the villages. The evening sun sparkled in the distant windowpanes, which flashed fiery and golden amongst the dark green. In the blue sky little white clouds were afloat, gradually turning into a rosy red color. As Franz now listed what he expected to have in the way of possession and property and how hard they would have to work and how much they would need to earn, Tillie assured him that she would be able to do without all that she had become accustomed to and that the best room in her parent's house never looked even half as beautiful as the flowering meadows they could see from the cliff, lavishly surrounded by foliage alive with little songbirds and butterflies. And even if they had to live not in this paradise but in Bonn in the narrow little street called Vivatsgäßchen and were to see nothing but their cramped little parlor, its only view from the window being a black wall, they would nevertheless still be a blissfully happy couple.

Back at home Tillie found the lights already lit in her mother's room and her father present. He sternly reproached her for leaving her mother unattended for so long; it was now nine o'clock, and since he had waited almost three hours for her he would probably not be able to meet Herr Breuer in the Zehrgarten.[15] Where had she been at this untimely hour?

The highly agitated situation in which the young girl found herself gave her the courage to confess everything. She did not let her father's increasingly angry face stop her, and she thought she was refuting every possible objection through her assurance that she would still be happy with her dear, good Franz, even in dismal poverty.

With this her brewer father struck the table so hard that he left a dent, and shouted: "But I'm not happy that my daughter's a fool and wants to bring a musician into the family to my dishonor and disgrace. I won't have it, and I don't care if you stand on your head."

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[15] *Zehrgarten* would be the name of a pub.

So it continued, with much angry shouting, and even Frau Chrissie got her fair share for having failed to keep a stricter motherly eye on Tillie. She did not know of any better way of escaping her husband's wrath other than to urge herself out of her lethargy and pour out more anger upon Tillie and not leaving the musician with a shred of worth.

Even the very next day the brewer ordered their return home to the city, and he believed that with this decision he had severed the detested union forever. His daughter felt quite the opposite. She had been strictly raised always to be obedient and had always been an exemplar of propriety. The first kiss she had granted her sweetheart became the deciding factor for her entire future. She considered it completely unthinkable to be estranged now from a man with whom she had once been so close and deeply intimate. She would have perished from agony and remorse should she have taken even one step back. So she resolved to go forward, no matter what the outcome should be.

She besieged her father with appeals to grant her chosen one just a short meeting before he rejected him. She believed it to be impossible for an old, money-conscious burgher to look at a handsome farmer boy and have a different perspective from that of his enamored daughter. All to no avail! The brewer father remained adamant: "A musician who plays at dances won't marry into my family!"

Meanwhile Franz found hundreds of ways and means of secretly meeting his Tillie and speaking with her. The more vigorous the opposition from the old man and relatives became, the more calm and determined the lovers were in pursuit of their decision.

Franz ceased to play at the fair and became enthusiastically involved in helping run the small farm, with the result that it soon took better shape. After a year Tillie came of age. On her twenty-first birthday Franz, in appropriate apparel and bearing, went to the brewer to ask for her hand in marriage. The fact that he had put aside his violin did not improve his situation; to the brewer he would forever be: the musician. The angry old man, who was just reading the weekly newspaper, refused to even look at him and, not allowing even the slightest disturbance, gave his most contemptuous answer regarding the matter.

The next day Tillie left her parental home and moved into rented accommodations with a respectable family. There then ensued the three legally required requests for the father's consent, and Tillie's mother and her family, unwilling to let the utmost, the outrageous happen to the family, now spoke up for her and encouraged a positive response from the father. But the brewer kept to his motto: "I am not like a weathervane upon the rooftop. My will is like an oak tree, and a musician shan't be coming into my house."

Tillie went to the altar with a bleeding heart, shedding copious tears, and without her parent's blessing. Further misery was added to what was supposed to have been the happiest day of her life by the ample criticism and mockery of her ill-meaning girlfriends, as her well-meaning girlfriends hastened to report. However, she was married only a few months when, neither shattered by thunder nor engulfed by the earth for her disobedience she experienced a turn of the tide. Everyone criticized the hard-heartedness of her father, who now, since the matter could no longer be changed, still stubbornly refused to see the young couple and was even less inclined to provide them with a little financial assistance since, for all their diligence, life had become hard for them.

The cousins, who in the past had been mostly responsible for inciting the brewer against the marriage, now came to him and reported: "A while ago I went by Tillie's house too, and, I must say, it's a joy to see how well-behaved and hard-working the little couple is. The man stood in the garden and pitched in to work and managed the farm hands as if he had a stake in the holding as well. His father's gone into retirement. They've bought the garden plot next door with the pear tree and they're building little summer cottages with small green roofs, exactly like at the innkeeper Plönnes' across the way. Just you watch, cousin, they're sure to outdo Plönnes!"

Annoyed, the brewer turned around and said, "Stop bothering me with all your talk about this musician; surely nothing decent and sound'll ever become of him."

After some time had passed, the cousins came back and said to him: "Imagine, dear cousin, now you've got a little grandson; I've never seen such a dear little creature as this. He lies in his cradle like a little potentate, and he's already got a whole little brown curl on the nape of his neck. He looks like your spitting image. Tillie and Franz would really like to invite you and your wife to be the godparents, if they only knew whether...."

At this point Frau Chrissie's eyes flooded with tears, and she spoke to her husband as best she could. But he suppressed all his human emotion and said: "As far as I'm concerned, they can find some busker from Bonn to be the godfather to this tramp's kid. I want no part of it." And with that he picked up his walking stick with its billiard ball for a handle and went to the tavern in the Zehrgarten for his customary get-together with his friend, the coal merchant. That old pal had already heard about the happy family event, and he extended his congratulations, assuming that reconciliation was now inevitable. But the new grandfather solemnly declared: "As you can see, I am not a weathervane upon the rooftop. My will is like an oak tree, and no musician's coming into my house, and that goes for his children, too!"

The coal merchant argued vehemently with his old friend and accused him of having a heart as hard and black as a lump of Ruhr coal.[16] Yet this did not disrupt their friendship since they were used to spicing up their half pints with some kind of dispute. Most times they took each other to task for getting so rich, and each knew when the other had bought a new piece of land or made a bad investment on a house. Then they would egg each other on to all kinds of business ventures and say: "See, a man like you can do that if now and then he came make a profit of a thousand on one good deal." Then the other would flatly deny the big profit and get even by surprising his friend with his knowledge of some supposedly secret business deal. And with that they would attack each other fiercely, yet smile smugly to themselves, knowing that the more they played down their wealth, the more their hearts swelled with pride in the knowledge they had it.

While the beer brewer fought this mock battle with the coal merchant in the Zehrgarten, the handsome, smart son of the former, Tillie's brother, was usually carrying on a similar argument with the beloved little daughter of the latter. He accused her, saying: "Gertrud, do you actually think I didn't notice you ogling that student with the long hair, the one who lives in the Giergasse? Yes, everyone knows that you girls aren't interested in a commoner's son any more. It's just gotta be a student."

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[16] This is a reference to the Ruhr region in western Germany, an urban area in North Rhine-Westphalia that lies along the Ruhr River, extending its boundaries to the Lippe River in the north, and the Rhine River to the west. Towns in the region become increasingly prosperous with the onset of the Industrial Revolution and the discovery of large coal deposits in basins along the Ruhr River.

Then Trudi retorted heatedly: "I'm supposed to have ogled that oddball? You're only sayin' that so I don't notice you watching for the professor's beautiful, blonde daughter, the one we've run into on the avenue."

With that the brewer's son interrupted her and vowed: "My lips shall never again taste even a drop of Mosel wine if I have desired any other girl but you, Gertrud!"

No matter how late the coal merchant returned home from the Zehrgarten he still found his old friend's son in front of the partially open window shutters, from behind which his daughter, still chipper and wide awake, was peeking out, as unsure of how to end the argument regarding his glancing at other girls as the coal merchant was about how to end his quarrel regarding investments. He had noticed that the two were in love for some time now; you didn't need very strong glasses to catch on to this, since it was so obvious even a blind woman would have felt it with her cane. Although there was no reason in the world to object to this, he still felt it was in order for an honest and upright father to squabble and nag about a love relationship. That is why he regularly growled: "Why aren't the shutters closed yet? Is it proper for a respectable young lady to be all lovey-dovey here in the dark? You, still a mere child, should have no clue about such things! And that long string bean there, doesn't he have anything better to do than come here to rendezvous in the evenings?"

So he tried to make things difficult for the little couple, until his old friend, the brewer, together with his son, showed up in Sunday finery and formally asked for Trudy's hand in marriage. The brewer was of the opinion that with people like them-with their earnings there were no difficulties. They only had to determine what each of them should contribute in order to set the two up with a perfectly nice little house and their own store on a good business street. On that point the coal merchant spoke in High German: "My dear old friend, there exists only one difficulty here, and I cannot give my consent to this marriage until it is resolved. When my daughter celebrates her wedding day the *entire* family must come together in peace and in unity to my home, and not a single member of the entire family is exempt from this condition. If you all want to make your peace and reconcile with Tillie, then I give my approval for your son to marry my daughter; but I will not allow my child to marry into a family in which disunity and enmity live side by side."

The brewer would have loved to retort: "This is of no concern to you! Do as you wish, then we can both maintain our pride!" But he knew that his old friend was not one to be trifled with; he was even less keen to chance it that his son would repeat the scene that he had gone through with Tillie, and the whole public outcry it had caused. For this reason he controlled himself and said only, "A sensible man does not decide on matters such as this in haste. I want to think and consider what I have to do."

The next day the son came and explained to his future father-in-law that he would surely spoil everything if he were to insist on his refusal to allow the marriage to take place before reconciliation was reached. If his father were to encounter Tillie with her husband and child at the wedding ceremony in the church, he could not very well do anything but extend a friendly greeting. His heart has long since softened; he really just did not want to be seen knuckling under in response to conditions, and least of all where conditions were imposed.

This explanation made sense to the coal merchant, and he resolved to ease his old friend's embarrassment of giving in by reducing his shame to one poignant moment. But he impressed upon his son-in-law that he would do well to work on the old man; for if the whole idea were to fail, he assured him that he too had a stubborn streak, and he would rather postpone the date once more, even on the wedding day, than stand there and look like a fool in front of all the relatives.

With fear and worry the two betrothed anticipated a wedding day that, just when they thought it had come, could easily vanish many a year into the distant future. Wisely, no one reminded the brewer of the condition, so as not to rouse his obstinacy; far better for his heart to be softened by use of craft and cunning, freely mentioning similar cases that were supposed to have happened here and there.

Finally the anticipated and feared morning dawned. The palm leaves were lavishly strewn from the bride's front door all the way to the church. The neighbors thronged to their windows to admire the carriages filled with the guests dressed in all their finery. The faces of every arriving relative smiled at the festive table spread with an appetizing breakfast. Only the bridal couple exchanged worried glances, and the fathers-in-law stood side-by-side, somber and silent.

"The church bells 'ave been ringin' for some time!" the mother reminded them, "Aren't we going yet?" "One member of the family is still missing," the bride's father said, his proper High German befitting the solemn occasion, "without whom I am not attending."

Now the door opened and Tillie stepped into the house, so elegant that her own father did not recognize her. He had not seen her for two years. When she left her parental home, her cheeks were pale and haggard, her eyes sunken, and her figure had become so gaunt and delicately fragile that her bones stood out to the point of snapping.

Now her face was fuller, as it had been in her girlhood, and the womanly breadth of her shoulders and hips gave her a genuinely impressive appearance.

The old man thought he was seeing his wife, Chrissie, again, the way she had looked in their first years of marriage while she sat beside him on Sundays in the arbor and he had then thought to himself: "The most beautiful woman in the entire city is mine."

He almost went to greet his daughter, but then his eye fell upon her husband, who was coming in behind her, and he turned away, his expression turning grim. His old friend took careful note of all this and prepared to confront him, which the bridal couple awaited with trembling. Then Tillie, who had been warmly greeted by all and tearfully embraced by her mother, went to her father and said: "Good morning, dear father! Won't you give me your hand?" She took the hand that he tried to pull away; but as she grasped it between her two hands and as a hot tear fell upon it, he relented and replied with a tone of voice meant to sound stern: "Good day, Till!" – and not a word more.

Then his son-in-law approached him and said cautiously: "My most honored father, if my presence is uncomfortable to you, then I will leave again immediately." The brewer growled in an undertone without looking up: "This isn't my house you're in!"

The coal merchant's face became more and more angry and red; he was just about to break out with a tirade – when Tillie took the child, who squealed loudly and babbled "Aidaidai" to her, from the arms of her maid, who had shyly remained at the door. Instinctively the grandfather looked towards the child and, astonished at his heart's emotion, he stamped his foot. Making as if he wanted to revive his fury, he forced himself to fix his gaze upon the despised musician. His prejudice against this class of people had always caused his imagination to picture Franz as a somewhat uncouth, bumbling vagrant. But how his arrogance dwindled now as, with even the most penetrating of looks, he could not detect anything that conformed to his cherished image of a musician. The young man looked completely sensible and respectable; he had a fine manly bearing and was definitely not dressed in the style of a street singer, but rather in a style appropriate for a member of the parish council. He compared him to all those present and found, half in frustration, half with delight, that he had no need to be ashamed of the young man – were it not for the stigma that he had once played at the parish fair.

Abruptly the coal merchant broke the silence with an almost thunderous voice: "Are we going to celebrate a wedding today, or not? I am tired of all this sulking. And I'm no weathervane up on the rooftop, and my will is like that of an oak tree, I'll show you!"

This daringly proclaimed maxim provoked the brewer to renewed defiance. Resolutely he drew himself up to his full height and made as if to leave the room, but his daughter, holding his grandson, still stood in his way. The little boy saw the imposing looking vest with its shiny buttons, and with a shout of joy, stretched out both hands towards it, clinging to his grandfather. With that the old man broke down sobbing, so that his son-in-law had to support him in his arms. He did not push him away, nor his daughter, but instead embraced her and the child in his arms, trembling and weeping.

The son's wedding was celebrated that very day.

Musical Orthodoxy

Novella

by

Johanna Kinkel

"I shall not learn to play the F minor Sonata any better than this after all," Ida said, and, feeling tired, she stood up from the piano.[17] "Actually, it's going rather well, and even my overly strict teacher would have been satisfied with it," she added. "I fear that what I still feel is missing will not be improved upon with further practice. At the start I was much more adept at expressing the incomprehensible fantastic element of the first allegro, the desperate toying with pain in the adagio, and the finale's laughing plunge towards its closing doom and demise. However, by taking care to polish the fast passages, I have made my performance smoother, more delicate, and I can no longer find my way back to the grand style. I now play the sonata accurately, but it lacks soul, which is extremely disastrous!"

"You are also being too exacting and overly fussy," replied an elderly lady who was sitting in the corner of a sofa listening, "and you impart to the music things that no other human being even perceives."

The young pianist had been orphaned at an early age and taken into the care of distant relatives. A prudent guardian had for the most part used her small fortune mainly to develop her outstanding musical talent. Now she was independent, and she had spent the remainder of her inheritance on the purchase of an Erard grand piano.[18] Scarcely enough money remained for her to be able to pay for the traveling costs to where she would ultimately be living and for the purchase of a few very simple furnishings.

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[17] A reader might suspect that the sonata discussed here could be Schumann's Sonata No. 3 in F minor, op. 14 (1835), however his sonata does not have the same movements that correspond to those mentioned in the text. In the light of Ida's overwhelming preference for the works of Beethoven and the other "great masters" (Bach, Mozart, Gluck), as evident throughout the ensuing story, it is more likely one of his two piano sonatas in that key, thus either the No. 1, op. 2, or the No. 23, op. 57, known as the "Appassionata." Although Ida mentions here difficulties with only three movements – a possible match with the three-movement "Appassionata" – Linda Siegel (page 2) more correctly surmises that the four-movement Sonata No. 1 is the piece in question, since Ida's comments refer to a "first" allegro and to an "adagio," features matching Sonata No. 1 and ruling out the No. 23.

[18] Erard was a French firm founded by Sébastien Erard that produced pianos and harps. Even in the earliest years of the firm's existence Erard was successful in securing the endorsement of many clients of the upper-class including royalty, and this allowed him to focus on producing instruments of only the

She disliked the idea of traveling around and giving concerts, since her musical preferences were in conflict with the prevailing tastes of the public; nor would her reticent, private nature have allowed her to submit to the thousands of small humiliations from which no one who is yet unknown and still looking to find success abroad is exempt. She much preferred to start a new life as a teacher in some major city and, by sacrificing herself to the training of beginners, acquire the means by which to rise to the highest level of art, which was unattainable for her in her remote home town.

Now she had been taken in as a guest by an old friend of her deceased mother, the wife of a district magistrate by the name of Werl, who lived in Waldheim, which was situated in a mountain valley one hour from the capital city. Ida was to stay there until she had found a suitable place to live and acquired a few girls as pupils. Frau Werl was very pleased to accompany her into the city daily in order to pay the necessary visits and to make inquiries, the result unfortunately being many futile trips.

The reception she received in artistic circles of the city was rather cool, or so it seemed to Ida. Being accustomed to the warmly familiar surroundings of family and friends of her youth, she found the big-city manners frosty, and she was taken aback by the abruptness with which the notables of the music world dismissed her questions. Most times she was placated with the line: it would all come together if she were patient and

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highest quality. His pianos were typically known for their fine craftsmanship and, by nineteenth-century standards, for possessing a first-rate powerful tone and clarity. Erard was responsible for introducing a new repetition action in 1821 that served as the forerunner to modern grand piano actions. By the late nineteenth century the firm was up against stiff competition by German piano makers. Finally, when in 1971 the Schimmel Company of Braunschweig acquired rights to the name of Erard, production in France ceased.

waited until her achievements became better known; yet no one made a move to promote her achievements, even though for her a rapid decision was absolutely essential.

Located next to the Werls' residence in the little village of Waldheim was the villa of Count Selvar, which he tended to occupy from the earliest signs of spring until the seasonal November storms. The Werls were always warmly welcomed at the villa, and whenever the count met them, he would repeat his invitation to visit more often. Yet Frau Werl accepted the invitation only during the colder season, when there were no visits from those of the finer circles who filled the count's salon and garden through the summer months. For Ida's sake, Frau Werl temporarily overcame this shyness towards high society. The Selvar household pursued music passionately, and once this family showed interest in Ida, she would without fail gain entrance into the foremost homes of society.

Frau Werl shared her plan with Ida and admonished her not even to consider performing any of Johann Sebastian Bach's fugues in the salon of the count, because that would completely ruin everything.

"Why should I not perform my very best?" Ida said. "I don't know of anything else that better serves to sustain attentiveness than a fugue. I am inclined to compare the flowing progression of the fugue's parts and phrases with the eternal movement of the stars, while the mysteriously entwined melismata within the preludes remind me of the strange mosses and rock formations that I have occasionally seen.[19]

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[19] The term *melisma* comes from the Greek meaning melody and indicates a long passage of several notes that are sung to one syllable of a text, whereas *syllabic* indicates one note per each syllable of text.

Frau Werl shared with the young Bach-enthusiast her own experiences regarding the musical delicacies of refined society, and luckily enough she managed to persuade Ida to reacquaint herself with and brush up on some compositions by Hummel and Carl Maria von Weber, pieces poised on the borderline between the classics and purely trivial music.[20]

Around teatime she and Ida walked next door where, the servant informed them, the guests were assembled at the rear end of the garden, under the new tent.

"That is another passion of the count's," Frau Werl told Ida as they strolled through the garden, "he is always redesigning the grounds, and, one must admit, he has very good taste."

Ida had never before seen such a charming place as this, combining as it did the elegant with the fanciful. The small orchards and precious flower gardens as well as the artificial promenade had always been intolerable to her, and the wild mountain forest had been her only preferred place for a stroll. But here for the first time she was confronted with the abundant poetry of plant life that was well ordered and presented in the most picturesque forms. The country home, snow-white in appearance and built in well-scaled proportions, was adjacent to a number of tall, dark linden trees. Out of the garden salon the guests stepped into a wide circle of aloes and blooming orange trees. The garden's expanse stretched perhaps a half hour's walk alongside and beyond a small stream up to a small village that all seemed to be part of the grounds.

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[20] Johann Nepomuk Hummel (1778–1837) was an Austrian composer and pianist, showing considerable early musical talent impressing even Mozart, who gave him lessons for two years. Carl Maria von Weber (1786–1826) was a German composer, conductor, pianist, and critic. By the age of thirteen he had already written his first opera, and as a music critic he strongly advocated that German opera free itself from the influences of Italian opera.

Walking through arcades of clematis and wild vine, along the most beautiful flower beds, fountains, and aviaries, Ida and her patroness reached the tent where a large gathering of ladies and gentlemen was so engrossed in their bantering conversation that they did not even seem to notice the inconspicuous figures of the new arrivals coming onto the scene. The count had just gone to another part of the garden with several of the guests. His sister welcomed the strangers and did offer Frau Werl a place by her side and obligingly engage Ida in conversation, but every time a new carriage arrived, she had to greet and introduce new guests, with the result being that the only two bourgeois at the table were never quite able to rid themselves of a depressing feeling of abandonment. Even though the lady of the house was tactful enough to turn her attention to the two and engage them in conversation whenever she had a free moment, she could hardly have allowed herself the impropriety of devoting solely to two persons the consideration she owed the larger circle of guests. The others were too self-centered to allow even for one moment any disturbance to their comfortable state. They gossiped with their friends and took no notice of the awkwardness felt by the two strangers, who, after they had quietly talked about the beautiful surroundings for a short half hour, seized the first opportune moment to take their leave.

Once outside, Ida heaved a heavy sigh of relief and was just on the verge of declaring to her companion a vow never again to visit this stifling atmosphere, when a man whom she assumed to be the head gardener walked quickly in front of them across a bridge without noticing them. He was casually dressed in a light grey ensemble and wore a large straw hat pulled down low over his forehead.

"What a strikingly beautiful face that is" Ida said. "I would have thought faces like that could occur only in an antiquities museum, not in real life."

"But that is the count," Frau Werl said with a laugh: "Well now, he is indeed something of an antique, even though he has the bearing of a young, romantic painter."

Ida heard to her amazement that the man whom she had judged to be barely forty, had to be at least fifty-eight years old. He had an enduring, manly beauty that can still be captivating in an old man. Though in his youth, of extremely slight build, he had through the years quite charmingly acquired a powerful fullness of build that never exceeded its elegant proportions. His profile, with its aquiline nose, its appealing, finely formed lips above a prominent chin, was truly majestic. While blue or black eyes typically take on a cloudy color in old age, his dark grey eyes had acquired an intellectual clarity that gave his features something captivating and irresistible.

"What an immense asset a beautiful face is," Ida said with a sigh: "I trust this complete stranger to be capable of an understanding of all things great and beautiful simply because he looks so very intelligent. Were I beautiful, or were I to just have something impressive about my face or bearing, one or another in that circle of guests that I just left with a heavy, dejected heart would surely have conversed with me, whereas no one stops to consider the fact that there also lives a soul behind the pale face of a person of lower station."

After several days came a friendly invitation addressed to the Werls and their guest to spend a quiet evening with Count Selvar and his family.

"Thank God it is a rainy day today," Frau Werl said, "We shall probably be the only guests there."

And that is exactly how it was. With the exception of the count's married daughter and her husband, no one else came. Magistrate Werl, a very lively old gentleman with whom Selvar enjoyed visiting, had made the count aware of Ida's circumstances and prospects, while Ida engaged in a dispute with the young countess over Bellini and Donizetti.[21] Just like most other ladies of the aristocracy, the countess absolutely loved these two composers and found all of their compositions to be *magnifique*, *superbe*, etc....

Ida countered that the modern Italian style of composition was terribly lacking. She reminded the countess of the constantly recurring, cloying, colorless melodies that are incapable of expressing the highest ecstasy as well as the deepest pain within the human soul; of the embryonic bursts of creative genius that constantly appeared to be pretentious and absurd and that the slightest parody could immediately expose them in their total nakedness; of the monotone march-like rhythm; of the harmony that ran in circles in two or three related keys like a treadmill; and of the total nullity of the accompaniment and the interludes.

"And yet this music delights the whole world," the countess responded, "one hears it and sings it with delight every day, whereas during an oratorio by Bach or Handel one falls asleep out of sheer boredom."[22]

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[21] The Sicilian, Vincenzo Bellini (1801–1835) and the Italian, Gaetano Donizetti (1797–1848) were leading composers of *bel canto* opera, a term used to define a style in Italian opera in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, distinguishable by clarity of tone, precise enunciation, legato phrasing, and virtuoso skill in executing the most ornate and florid passages.

[22] An oratorio falls into the genre of vocal music similar to opera as far as its musical elements are concerned, but is performed without costumes or staging, and its text is usually based on Biblical texts. Johann Sebastian Bach (1685–1750) was a German composer and organist, and after his death his music was largely forgotten. Renewed interest in his compositions surfaced in the early nineteenth century with the publication of his biography. George Frederic Handel (1685–1759) was a German composer, most notable for his operas and oratorios, his most famous oratorio being the *Messiah* (1742). In contrast to

"Those who find that these masters bore them," Ida retorted "I would hardly trust to have any artistic sense at all. Perhaps it is complacency in thought of many musically talented people that entices them to surrender, with only half an ear and half their soul, to the sensual lure of a flattering melody, not demanding to know whether this is true and noble art. Were Madame Countess just once able to compel herself to carefully follow the course of each single voice in a Bach fugue or to study a Beethoven sonata in such a way as to experience its endless depths, she would not want, after such intellectual enjoyment, to return to the insipid fooling about with sounds."

The countess laughed and asked why she should expend the effort on such a strenuous study when the lighter music that she herself understood sounded just as pleasant. "That may be for the learned musicians," she added, "who understand the so-called counterpoint.[23] A leading melody that is not hampered by the bass and the middle voices is sufficient for us. The artificial modification is simply at fault for the fact that the most beautiful is no longer clearly understood. It is surely a sign of refined taste that the Italians compose in such an elegant and simple manner."

The count now reminded the guests that they would surely prefer to enjoy the actual music rather than its discussion and offered Ida his arm to lead her to the piano.

Ida chose Hummel's Fantasie in E flat major, a piece residing on the furthest boundary of the field that a musician accustomed to Sebastian Bach does not cross and

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Bach, Handel's music remained consistently popular with the public.

[23] The term "counterpoint" is used to denote an aspect of musical composition combining two or more melodic lines, in which primary attention is given to the horizontal movement of the parts.

whose charming ornamentation, on the other hand, is still able to reconcile a Bellini fanatic.

Ida's merits as a pianist were particularly notable in the diverse nuances that she demonstrated in her performance. Even though at times other performers outshone her technically, she still remained inimitable in the interest she was able to impart to a composition with the free development of her own individual interpretation, so that the piece seemed at times to be part drama, part picture, yet she never crossed the boundaries set by the composer's intention. Whenever she became particularly passionate, her fingers would take flight, her cheeks would flush, and her dark eyes would sparkle.

Selvar observed her closely while she played and marveled at the changes in her features, which previously had seemed so insignificant. When she stood up, he was subtly and cleverly aware of how to pay her the customary compliments in an entirely new manner, so that their delivery sounded more like an evaluation directed towards those present, rather than mere compliments.

"Can you also sing as beautifully as you play?" he asked.

"Singing is not my field of expertise, yet I do like to sing songs whose lyrics express my mood; but I can perform these with proficiency only when I am alone; I believe that for an audience I would be in danger of exposing my innermost emotions were I to sing with passion."

"That is a less artistic attitude than I would have thought you capable of expressing."

After several refusals, which, by the way, were made in all seriousness, Ida, in a rich, deep, contralto voice, sang some exceedingly beautiful foreign folk songs, their translations still unknown in this circle of guests.

Selvar was completely carried away; his nature, which the years had never tamed of its enthusiasm, now enticed him to expressions of admiration, these having just as inspiring an effect on the performer. The pent-up ardor of her soul took flight in mellifluous, jubilant, despairing, and mischievous songs, and in successive lightning-like flashes these sensations, which had not yet been completely extinguished from his youth, became reignited in the heart of Ida's listener. To the same degree that her memory was inexhaustible, so his desire to listen to her beautiful songs was insatiable. The other guests did eventually find it to be a bit too much. At first they were unanimous in their request for more, later they retreated from the windowed side room where the piano stood and moved back to the adjoining salon in order to enjoy some stolen moments of conversation along with the music.[24] Lamps were brought in, but the count had forbidden light, insisting that it would distract from the pure effect of the music. The only light came from the rising moon, peering in through an opened garden window and between fragrant orange trees, and the sounds of the gently splashing waterfall kept in time with the moving, enchanting song by Goethe:

> Bush and vale thou fill'st again

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[24] The usage of "side room" here is to translate the German term *Kabinett*, which is an archaic Austrian designation for a small room with only one window or a small side room found in particular in palaces and castles.

With thy misty ray,[25]

Ida now stood up because she feared Frau Werl might reprimand her for isolating herself far too long from the other guests. While still in the doorway, the count impulsively grasped her hand, pressed it to his heart, called her "dear, precious friend," and showered her with flattery, how she had conjured up anew his favorite forgotten dreams from the distant past and how her voice was given over his soul a magic power that he could not explain.

During the evening meal Ida was distracted and ill at ease. She felt no thought to be appropriate enough to express to him. Her wits forsook her whenever she looked into his compelling eyes, which he kept fixed on her, his gaze solemn and assured.

Since her childhood, Ida's contacts were limited to the very petit bourgeois, the only exceptions being her guardian and her music teacher. The eligible group of young men in her home town consisted mostly of those who were either business minded or prospective farmers. Now when she thought back on the few who she once thought seemed to be well-educated and pleasant or whose good manners had stirred a little bit of excitement in her, she was ashamed of herself. How aesthetic were all the count's movements, how calm was the slow cadence of this distinguished man's voice; what awesome respect his noble, magnificent appearance instilled in her! And this very man with a face so royal in appearance had pressed her hand against his heart, had called her his dear, precious friend. So he too had felt his heart being drawn towards her, as she had felt hers drawn to him; she believed this with trembling ecstasy.

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[25] Translation of Goethe's *An den Mond* (To the Moon) is by Edgar Alfred Bowring (1826–1911). Bowring was a British translator, author, and a civil servant, whose translations of Goethe's poems were published in 1853 – hence their use here as chronologically proximitous. J.W. von Goethe. *Poems of Goethe:* "To the Moon". Trans. Edgar Bowring. *Archive of Classic Poems*. 30 June 2008 (http://www.everypoet.com/archive/poetry/goethe/goethe_contents.htm) John Sullivan Dwight also translated Goethe's poem and published it in his weekly "Journal of Music" Vo. XIII. No. 9, May 29, 1858 alongside Thayer's translation of Kinkel's *Musikalische Orthodoxie*; his translation of the above line of text reads: "Fillest hill and vale again, Still, with softening light!"

Never being accustomed to pretense, Ida did not make the slightest effort to conceal her surge of passion. Back at home she would often sit, totally silent, not interested in any conversation, and gaze over towards the white house. She became flushed whenever the count appeared and trembled noticeably when he came over to visit her. Frau Werl soon became aware of Ida's feelings and was zealously determined to cure her of such unnatural folly – for that is precisely how Frau Werl saw the passion of a young girl towards a man who, politely said, was nearing old age.

She told Ida of the many love affairs that, as rumor had it, the count had apparently had during and after his marriage, and she warned her not to make herself an object of mockery and derision by placing too much stock in his friendliness towards her. The ever-recurring conversational theme at meal times, in which Magistrate Werl, though less rigorously, also joined in, was: "Selvar is a male version of the coquette and all the more dangerous because he himself does not remain cold. But his enthusiasm lasts only to the point where he realizes that he has made a profound impact: then his vanity is satisfied, and he is again coldly polite and obligingly friendly as ever. What all does not excite him in a woman! Beauty, talent, elegance, and the laissez-faire of genius, basically anything that attracts attention. A calculating, witty, meticulously perceptive intellect captures his attention the longest. When he is deprived of these refined qualities within his own environment, for amusement he might even deign to pay court to such talents clad even in the simple cotton dress of a lower class."

Ida of course believed none of this and saw only her friends' real intention. The portrayal was also not really true to the same extent in which it was given with good intention. To the enthusiasm that Selvar often felt for women – be it for the noble, the spiritual, or even simply the outwardly charming – there was, at base, a core of honesty. Of course there was an aura of vanity and refined dalliance about it as well, yet that was not the essence of it all, and the loving element was just as little merely outward affect.

The now quite frequent invitations from the count were declined under all kinds of pretexts and excuses by Magistrate Werl, who could still not prevent the count from coming to visit and, without any sign of inhibition, sitting down beside Ida at the piano. Consequently, it was impossible for Frau Werl to carry out what she saw as her duty, namely never to leave the couple alone for even one moment in order to ensure, as she so boldly declared, that "the old roué did not completely turn the inexperienced girl's head." More often than not, an unguarded moment occurred in which the count was able to cast another new spark into Ida's soul, which she would then for days nurture quietly to herself.

Ida's first concern was to escape from the tyranny of her protectress, whose constant disparaging remarks against Selvar she found intolerable. Ida announced that she at last wanted to resume her career as a teacher. Without delay, she had rented lodgings in the city, and since she had finally attracted the attention of high society through the amicable fondness that her friend had for her, she was now inundated with requests to give piano lessons.

And now began a new way of life for Ida, one to which she found adjustment very difficult. Every individual possessing exceptional musical talents and pursuing teaching as a profession must make allowance for a certain period of time at the outset in which disappointments so inevitably occur. All of this free time that Ida had previously devoted to studying the most exceptional works was now consumed by students, the majority of whom were for the most part bereft of talent and who all too often stumbled through difficult compositions for which they lacked skill. She herself had not yet learned to pace herself and to settle into a routine, which was ultimately necessary for a music teacher to possess, so as not, out of misguided obligation, to try to teach the students more than they could reasonably grasp during an hour-long lesson. In addition to this there was the still greater difficulty: her mind was completely preoccupied with another interest, and whenever she realized that she had absent-mindedly allowed a student to continue to play while in her daydream she was with her wonderful friend over in Waldheim, she would give a start and double her efforts to be attentive. Then, right in the midst of her attempt to redeem her unconscionable behavior, her soul would once again be taken captive. She would come home exhausted and throw herself into one corner of the sofa so that she could finally think about him undisturbed; then the drive to learn a new work would jolt her upright again, and with unbelievable effort she would force herself to turn her honest attention to expanding her repertoire in the few evening hours left available to her for this endeavor. But then all her best intentions came to naught whenever the count's carriage stopped outside her door to take her to Waldheim. These invitations were irresistible to her, yet she never found peace in her soul whenever she accepted them.

Even though Ida had alienated herself from her former protectress, she nevertheless felt obliged to pay her a visit each time prior to entering the home of her new friends. On these occasions Frau Werl could never resist taking the opportunity to torment the young artist who had withdrawn from her servitude, by warning or mocking her, which in turn spoiled Ida's entire evening. She would seldom then find compensation for that in an intimate, warmhearted conversation with Selvar, because the young countess, his daughter, purposefully prevented that from happening. Selvar's family was used to his fleeting, passionate affections towards one or another fine lady of society and found this to be quite in order. The situation with Ida however, threatened to have serious results because the count's passion was reciprocated with youthful intensity.

This concern in itself was unfounded because even though some small amount of teasing flattered Selvar, he himself felt somewhat apprehensive when he considered Ida's extreme lack of self control and her worldly ignorance. He was always in danger of Ida's giving herself away in public with a blatant expression of love, causing people to snicker, whereas he himself continued to maintain the boundaries of common sense. Because of this he became more and more sparse doling out his expressions of passion and allowed himself free reign with his feelings only during those hours in which he was certain that he had sufficient time left to once again calm down his admirer.

Music was the best means for this purpose. Ida's own soul craved spiritual nourishment after she had endured a long day of her students' musical mediocrities. Her beloved melodies had become a language of love. Selvar sensed how, at the highest ardor of her performance, she aspired to submit her whole being to him. Nothing frivolous existed in her music playing. By choosing only the most noble of what art has passionately created to express her feelings, her expression appeared to be exalted and transfigured into poetry.

She was thunderstruck when Selvar suggested that she rehearse Herz's Variations on a Theme by Rossini.[26] He had heard these in a concert and had been tremendously charmed by them.

The young countess, who noticed Ida's hesitation, joined in to say: "After all, people eventually become tired of the boring Beethoven, and your repertoire would benefit substantially through some variety."

As usual, Ida vehemently expressed her scorn for all the mere, crude fabricators who concocted variations, and she declared that in the arts Herz was judged to be on the lowest rung and that, strictly speaking, he and his equals did not even count.

The count wanted to calm her down: "My friend," he said gently, "you are far too extreme in your judgment. One has to be fair to all achievements. I like listening to Beethoven very much, but listening to Rossini provides me with just as much enjoyment. I would find it completely charming if, for my sake, you wanted to study the modern Italian music with as much enthusiasm as I until now have faithfully followed you into the labyrinth of classical German music."

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[26] Henri Herz (1803–1888) was an Austrian pianist, composer, teacher, and piano manufacturer. His musical gifts became apparent from the young age of eight and in 1816 he entered the Paris Conservatoire to study piano and composition. In 1851 he set up his own piano factory, turning out pianos that were held in high regard by his contemporaries. He maintained a busy concert schedule, touring widely throughout Europe and North America, but his compositions, which were written mainly for piano, were most often meant to fulfill his own repertoire needs as a virtuoso pianist. Schumann wrote a scathing critique in the "Neue Zeitschrift für Musik," stating that Herz's music was "merely vapid, meretricious display, without originality or enduring qualities." The last criticism seems to have been substantiated with the passing of time.

For a moment Ida froze. Then she said: "Does that not imply: Accept the bad, and we shall be tolerant towards the good?"

The young countess countered pointedly: "Even the greatest of talents loses value when the artist's modesty departs."

Her father's disapproving look instantly silenced the young countess. Actually, he too had felt offended by Ida's remark, yet he had already forgiven her and perceived her remark to be more one made out of social ignorance, which he hoped his influence would smooth and polish more and more.

Ida's eyes filled with tears. Selvar suggested a walk in the garden. An autumn chill was in the air; the falling yellow leaves reminded her of her imminent return to the city. Selvar asked Ida to view his home there as if it were her own father's house and pressed her arm to his breast even more tenderly than a father would have done. Ida had already silently promised herself that to honor him, as her highest love offering, she would practice the despised variations, although doing so she would be denying her musical religion. Against her conscience she posed the notion: "Who knows whether this form of music does not possess its own magic, which remains eternally concealed only for those who do not plunge into it with child-like faith. I have never patiently played such a piece to its conclusion, I would just throw it away after the first few pages; just one pretentious passage was enough to spoil it all for me, a completely charming melody that perhaps was not without soul. In similarly unjust manner, I have not yet been able to attribute noble thoughts to a person with a fashionable hairstyle."

To this train of thought, Selvar unwittingly added several more comments that served to strengthen Ida's resolve to be tolerant. He said: "In your lovely enthusiasm you have so often persuaded me that your composers Gluck and Handel as well as your other idols can grasp the most sacred of human emotions, the greatest destiny, they can grasp what is mortal and reveal it in the tones of music. But how few people have ever experienced profound greatness or are capable of understanding it? How little sympathy we have for an opera such as *Armide* or *Alceste*![27] The mythical figures in these operas have little appeal to our compassion, and we must work ourselves into a heightened mood that we can hardly be expected to conjure up every evening during teatime. Should we as salon people, with the pains of our salon life that are truly often no less than those of a tormented heart, should we not be fully entitled to cultivate an art form that precisely describes our suffering? Just as does refined convention, the social grace of outward appearance covers every raw outburst of passion, and that is how the charming fioritura of Rossini and his followers veils the deeper expressions of a heartache that, without this adornment, would strike us as an embarrassing show of emotion."[28]

Ida began learning the variations at home and in two days came to terms with the truth that it is easier to plunge into mortal danger for a beloved being than it is to bear a daily, recurring, unpleasant situation – a sacrifice that is not even recognized as such by the one to whom it is offered with a bleeding heart.

While the majority of worthy musical pieces pose few problems in terms of technical difficulty, such that an accomplished player can at once derive from their contents a pleasure that then grows each time the piece is played, the opposite is the case with salon music. A superficial melody, though instantly retained in the memory, must be tirelessly repeated for days on end because the absurd jumps and ornamentation that are added to the melody must be played blindly, with enormous speed. Even the finest virtuoso will spend at least a month perfecting the most difficult modern concert piece.

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[27] Both operas are by German composer Christoph Willibald Gluck (1714–1787).

[28] The musical term "fioritura" denotes highly ornamented vocal passages, either improvised or written out.

Ida fell into despair over the third variation. She sat at the piano, her eyes filled with hot tears of displeasure at having vowed to carry through with her promise to learn the variations. The few hours of leisure that she did have passed by without any noticeable success in executing the jumps in faster and more polished fashion. This tinkling was too foreign to her; she would have preferred to play the entire *Well-tempered Klavier* straight off of the sheet music.[29] She now sensed from a distance the danger that, the more brilliantly she played this piece, the wider she would open the floodgates to all those *Rondo brilliants*, those *Fantaisies sur des themes favoris*, indeed to the whole cloyingly sweet stock of Schott and Sons publishing.[30] Her loyal Erard grand piano seemed profanely contaminated, and after she had at first hurled the "Henri Herz" into a corner and then, startled, picked this gift from her beloved up again, kissed it and placed it gently on the table, she pulled out the *Chromatic Fantasy* and played it to make amends with her dear piano's strings.[31]

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[29] Written by J. S. Bach, this is a collection of 48 preludes and fugues consisting of one prelude and fugue for each major and minor key. The pieces in the compilation all date from various phases in Bach's life and vary in style.

[30] Schott and Sons was a German firm of music publishers founded in Mainz in 1780 by Bernhard Schott (1748–1809). Piano scores and arrangements of popular operas were published and later, his two sons further developed the catalogue as well as bought out numerous other firms, making "B. Schott's Söhne, as it came to be known, highly successful during the nineteenth century.

[31] *Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue* in D minor composed by J.S. Bach for harpsichord, ca. 1720.

Suddenly the thought flashed through her mind: "This sacrifice is beyond me, and he cannot ask it of me. If I had the whole day at my disposal, as before, I would allocate a few hours to this monstrous music and then recuperate afterwards with the more excellent works. But now that I teach for six hours and spend almost every evening in Waldheim, I must languish spiritually when the few hours of leisure are stolen from me. Surely he will understand this when I explain to him how this Henri Herz is killing me. But the other I can do: learn to sing Italian operas. These take less time and provide him with just as much pleasure."

At once she had the Bellini arias brought to her and attempted to sing them in the modern prima-donna style. She almost had to laugh at herself; because she felt as if she were trying on a carnival costume.

"How can Selvar believe," she exclaimed, "that such caricatures express true love and real grief! Only lies and affectation are present in this music, and what more are we to think of the elegant feelings of the salon crowd, when they say: that is our language. And *Alceste* or *Iphigénie* cannot be understood in today's world?[32] What then is eternal and accessible for all generations if not the sacred urge of parental, spousal, and sibling love, for which Gluck has discovered the truest and simplest language? The pride and devotion of Armide, do these qualities not rise up anew in every heart that, after battling despair, is overwhelmed by the passion for beauty!"

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[32] This is a reference to Gluck's operas, either *Iphigénie en Aulide*, a three act opera, or *Iphigénie en Tauride*, a four act opera, the latter considered by scholars to be his finest work.

"Alas, who can it be that eradicates every trace of life's existence," she began to sing, and engrossed herself so deeply in the role of Armide that she failed to hear the knock on the door and suddenly found Selvar standing next to her.[33]

It was the first time that he had paid her a visit to her lodgings. Up until now he had avoided coming into the city; but now as he made the transition from his country estate to his winter residence, he wanted to offer her a few rooms in his house, where, as he suggested, she could live under the protection of his family in a manner more suitable and proper for big city life, rather than her current living situation, all alone among strangers.

As enticing as this suggestion of living under the same roof with him seemed to Ida, as sweet as was the dream of entering a closer relationship with him – and she was not entirely clear about what kind of a relationship – she still had an indefinable fear of accepting anything from him that would have even just the appearance of a gift. She could reciprocate with love and spiritual offerings, but with what was she to repay the lavish hospitality of this rich man, other than by bringing her talents into servitude to the salon? She was prepared to use her talents to restore him at any time of the day, whenever he found this pleasure-filled world shallow, but it was exactly out of this insipid world that she, in her childlike innocence, wanted to draw him and into the sacred temple of the heavenly life that music was for her.

After she had resolutely turned down Selvar's offer, she presented to him everything she had pondered that day regarding good and bad music, laying it all out in organized arguments. By way of demonstration she played examples, now by Gluck, now by Bellini, and felt that she would convince him, now or never.

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[33] The reference here is to Gluck's opera *Armide*, Act 1, in which Armide laments her inability to vanquish Renaud, the one adversary who defies her conquering force. The English version of the libretto reads: "He bears a charmed life, defying wound and capture, / Attacked by kings with might and main." In the German line Armide's inability to obliterate all trace of life in him is emphasized.

Instead, she alienated herself from his affection, since he found her stubbornness in a matter that did not have the same degree of importance to him to be quite unamiable. His mind was by no means closed to her arguments; but he felt her point of view to be very one-sided, since she validated only an exclusive few composers who she felt had fulfilled the true demands of art. Even more so than her inexhaustible repertoire, it was her obvious glow of love that had delighted him and that sparkled at him from her deep black eyes, from the blush of her youthful cheeks. It had been many long years since he had aroused such genuine passion and in such a transparent, pure young girl's soul. But now that she was unable to bring herself even to do what he had proposed merely as a favor, he began to have doubts about her feelings and, at the same time, doubts about whether she could learn to fit into his society. As upset as he felt, he was still able to summon up a very polite excuse for breaking off their conversation, kissing her hand and departing just as Frau Werl entered the room.

She had observed Selvar's preparations for the move out of Waldheim and felt obligated to warn her former charge one more time of the two-fold imminent danger.

"So, so," she began, "the count is already making himself at home here."

"This was his first visit here," Ida responded.

"Well since you go to visit him every day, he does not really need to make the effort to come and visit you."

"You yourself were the one who introduced me to his sister, and you know that I am indebted to the influence of this family for my position here; what else can I do but hold in gratitude to those who have cared for me just as if I were their own child?"

"And who will now just as surely see to it that you will lose this position. Do you actually believe that those oh-so-proper mothers will continue to allow you to teach their daughters, once your relationship to Count Selvar becomes the gossip of these finer circles?"

"And how is it possible to misconstrue a relationship to a friend who treats me as if he were my father?"

"That is some kind of nice, fatherly friend, who courts you just as he courted a whole parade of actresses and coquettes before you."

"You see this primarily from your own point of view. I, however, believe that he will surely not squander his refined mind on more than the usual gallantry towards unworthy objects. As for myself, I am long aware of his true interest."

"Well that is precisely the proof of how you are blinded by your foolish passion, the fact that you profess to have become acquainted with him in a few short months much more intimately than we, who have known him for half a lifetime. I am convinced that his vanity is playing an irresponsible game with you."

"Just now he has given me evidence of the very opposite," Ida said coldly.

"How?" Frau Werl exclaimed eagerly, "Has he really given you a proposal of marriage?"

Ida was stunned and became deathly pale and flushed. "God forbid what an insane assumption" she cried out and held both hands to her eyes. "How can you say such a thing? Such a thought has never even remotely stirred my soul."

"Of course not! Exaggerated nonsense as usual! The only reasonable conclusion to a romance is marriage. If that goal is not in the offing, then a sensible girl would break off all contact before the man has damaged her reputation. But please, do tell what plan your excellent, wise, and fatherly friend has concocted for you."

Ida innocently related Selvar's suggestion to her, and Frau Werl burst into loud peals of laughter.

"So that is the great proof of adoration that you have received from him. Well now, let me spare you the conclusions that the public would draw from such a living arrangement. But do you not detect the blatant egotism present in such an unreasonable demand that you are to fulfill the position of resident performing artist who plays the piano when the company is boring so that all the conversational lags go unnoticed, of the lady who entertains the family when they are not in the mood to go out, who performs fitting melodies alternating with amateur poetry during birthday festivities, and who, from visits to the theatre, memorizes the favorite arias from the new operas and is immediately able to reproduce them between courses."

"All this would be a needless waste of time for a man of Selvar's refinement. Anyway, everything that this city has to offer in aesthetic treats regarding the enjoyment of the arts is at his disposal. What would motivate him to single out me of all people, if it were not for the inclination of his kind benevolent heart!" replied Ida.

"Exactly therein lies the danger that a spark has actually fallen into this old inflammable heart. You understand your advantage all too little, and you dampen it by cooperating rather than fanning it into flame. If that would have occurred in my youth, I would have approached the matter quite differently. This Selvar has something in common with most men: if we turn away from a man, he pursues us; if a man notices that our heart is drawn towards his, his heart becomes cold. As soon as you realized that you were on the way to becoming indispensable to him, you would have done well to make yourself scarce, and precisely then, when he extended his most urgent invitation, you should not have responded. Then the thought would have finally entered his mind: what prevents me from making my twilight years as bright as possible! And he would have thrown all caution to the wind in order to win you forever. But now, why would he need to put up with the disapproval of his family, the ridicule of his peers, in order to win a heart that unconditionally throws itself at his feet?"

Ida cried out indignantly: "What an unworthy role you would have me play! So the egotism of love that you criticize in a man, you commend to me as virtue? No, it is better to be spurned, better to appear ridiculous to the world, than to be coldly calculating."

"Think what you like, only do not jest with this one point, with your reputation; this is my last good piece of advice."

With these words Frau Werl departed and left Ida in real mental anguish. This evening she was incapable of any clear thoughts. The cruel intrusion into her love sanctum had sullied the purity of her soul. She felt so ashamed, as if she herself and not Frau Werl had spoken of marriage. She had no desire to touch her piano. The variations, which she had vowed would not be interrupted by any new study, disgusted her; her favorite pieces could not comfort her, because of course they had been the source of their falling out, and oh, the last refuge of her wounded heart – to conjure up his image, to dream of him – was taken from her. She had doubtless felt the coolness and formality of his farewell today. Something had come between them, and, as much as she would have liked to have seen him again in order to destroy the evil spell, after Frau Werl's confusing prattle it would have been impossible for her to step into his home uninhibited.

This time several days passed before a note from the count arrived informing her that he, slightly indisposed and confined to his home, yearned very much to see her.

In that very moment she was on her way to see him. Finding several people assembled around his tea table, she decided to keep quietly to herself this time and to observe carefully the mood of the others towards her.

There was no denying that a few of them glanced at each other sneering when her eyes shyly looked at her beloved and then fled from him again; that the attitude of others was indeed polite, yet teasing in a way hurtful to her; that the young countess forced herself to make the effort to bridle her contempt against a certain someone who seemed to squeeze her out of her own father's heart; and that – this was the bitterest pill to swallow – he was more wary of not appearing ridiculous rather than of not hurting her. And she was deeply grieved that he did not appear to be as enchanted, as inclined to reckless abandon as he had been on those first unforgettable evenings in Waldheim.

With every meeting the rift became deeper because Ida lost her vivaciousness and gave society the impression of being dull and ill-humored. Her presence became more of a burden to the count rather than having the effect of cheering him up. At home she shed unrelenting tears over her beautiful dream, which would just not take shape anew. One moment she would doubt Selvar's love, and then she would hope once again to recover the old magic formula that might rekindle it. If she swore never to see him again, then she would grow weary of her life and soon give in to that old familiar desire to be dangerously close to him again. One moment she would want to appear to be happy, agreeable, naturally uninhibited, yet then, with her anxious heart trembling, she would only listen for him to utter a sign of longing, of yearning passionate ardor. But alas, his eyes always remained clear and friendly; his tone of voice remained gentle and warm-hearted like that of a father, but it never trembled. Whenever Ida was suddenly overcome by a memory or whenever she was moved to tears by a song whose lyrics Selvar had once, cautiously and perceptible only to Ida, repeated as the expression of his secret affection, then his attitude would became coolly polite, and he would direct the conversation back to more general topics.

Her anguish consumed her. He remained irresistibly charming, and she could no longer bear to be deprived of his presence. She found it quite natural to believe that she no longer held any appeal for him, and she did not hold this against him. She felt that she was no longer herself, that a withdrawn and tearful girl who was unable to gain control over her emotions must surely bore him. Her work was just as irritating to her as her lovesickness. In the past she managed to endure a whole sequence of ear-splitting piano lessons solely in anticipation of a lovely evening, the crowning touch to days of endless patience. Now every one of her students' mistakes caused her already overtaxed nerves to tighten up and overreact. During one lesson with a girl who totally lacked a musical ear and who with her right hand constantly played a minor chord along with a major third with her left hand, Ida seriously started to entertain suicidal thoughts. "Is it to be that we must go on living, is this to be our fate until we are old: listening to nothing but wrong notes?" she mumbled to herself on her way home.

And Selvar? He did not deny having made a mistake in that he trusted a girl who had been raised in a small town to come to grips with his love with the same ease as had the wife of the French ambassador. Yet for how deep the arrow had struck – for that, for all the wealth of his experiences in love, he had no way of judging. He believed that as soon as he had re-established for himself reasonable limits, calmly placating her would drive her childish feelings back into line. The fact that in this matter the old master stood on equal footing with his sorcerer apprentice caused mild feelings of anger to rise up against Ida, whose slow, melancholy glance he now would have preferred to avoid.

So the winter passed, and as early as March the count and his family moved back to Waldheim. Selvar went travelling with his daughter and her husband for several weeks. His sister remained alone in the country house and supervised the improvements to home and garden that he had ordered. Ida felt lighter of heart, even though it silently bled as she spent almost this entire time in the company of the kind old lady who had urgently advised her that she take the occasion to grant herself a short respite. This gentle soul touched the wounded spot within Ida's heart with such a mild, soothing manner. She understood how to be considerate of her feelings, when to speak and when to remain silent as the situation required. She possessed the rare talent to comfort without instilling false hope, and at the same time not to disturb the love sick girl's last poor refuge, her immersion in dreamy meditation.

Ida wandered with her through the vast, desolate garden, in which the snow had not yet melted away in many places. The first breath of warmer air coming from the south wafted playfully towards her. A bunch of violets had just recently come into bloom, and, like an electric charge, the thought surged through her heart: "Now everything must change course, everything."

Listen – was that not a carriage rolling into the courtyard? – Yes – he was returning! The fire within her heart blazing anew – she flew towards him – then regained control of her emotions and tightly held his sister's arm in order to conceal her excitement behind his sister's quietly subdued greeting. Then a second carriage arrived: the young countess stepped down out of the first and greeted Ida with her own spiteful smile, then secretly said a few words to her husband, who also gave Ida an ironic look. Selvar jumped out of the carriage, as bustling and light-footed as if he were still in his youth, and lifted down a very pretty lady of approximately twenty-eight, whom he introduced to his sister as their guest. Then he greeted Ida and said with a friendly voice: "You have me to thank for bringing you into close contact with one of the greatest singers of our time, one that you have often wished to hear. We stayed at the same hotel, where I persuaded her to take on guest roles here and, before that, to rest a while from the strains of winter within our family circle. "Here, Madame Fioretta," he said, turning to the stranger, "I present to you a female maestro."

The singer responded to Ida's greeting but briefly and at once directed her conversation towards the gentlemen. She shared the bad habit of most female stage performers of making herself inaccessible to any conversation with women. She had eyes and ears only for the men in society – and not just under the presupposition of men possessing a higher education; no, she preferred to converse with the least educated of men rather than with the most intellectually stimulating woman.

After several scenes in which Ida accompanied the singer playing from a score and, according to her wishes, instantly transposing into another key, Madame Fioretta must have become convinced that Ida was at the very least her artistic equal. Nevertheless, she did not direct one word, not one opinion to Ida, even less so did she notice in the course of conversation when Ida attempted a remark and, dismayed, broke off again.

With the exception of Ida, the others were all delighted by the battle of words that took place between Madame Fioretta and the count at dinner and that flashed like a colorful fireworks display. She was witty and, possessed of considerable coldness of heart, gifted with a great presence of mind. The count could not conceal his pleasure over the flippant, phelinic manner of this Italian woman, and Ida observed how, right before her very eyes, the gloomy night closed in on her, until finally the hour of parting granted her freedom.

The next morning she could stay no longer: she was finally driven back to the city, since all persuasion to the contrary was for naught. The singer, who did not like to accompany herself because she was in the habit of gesturing while singing, was sincere in joining in with the pleas of the family that Ida might return quite soon and quite often. This Ida promised to do and wanted to force herself to fulfill her commitment because she did not want to acknowledge the true reason for her reluctance.

The following afternoon, feeling confused and almost absent-minded, she wandered out past the city gate, out among the gardens and country houses that stretched from the suburb and almost to Waldheim. Dusk was starting to fall as she saw the gleaming terrace of the tall white house. Unsure if she should turn back, she stopped, dared to take a few more steps, and finally stood on the banks of the little brook just a short distance from the garden, where she could see the windows of the music room. The windows were illuminated with many lights, and because of the stillness of the evening she was able to distinguish familiar voices and, after an unskilled prelude revealing the young countess's hand, one of the count's favorite Rossini arias, which he had asked Ida to perform several times but to no avail. Madame Fioretta sang them in a manner that could have enabled her to reconcile a person with the entire Italian musical repertoire. The long sustained notes of the adagio in the lower voice region quivered and swelled from the loveliest tenderness to the most incredible power. Like the sound of crystal bells the singer broke in with the rondo, then the finale, which was in the highest soprano range and allowed the singer's magnificent voice to unfold its riches in full. No higher spirit was present in this performance, but a sensual magic that at moments had to dazzle and charm even the most uncompromising and rigorous music lover.

Ida was now aware of everything that was occurring within Selvar, as if she were actually present; she knew what he would be saying, with what kind of look he now gazed at the lips of the beautiful singer. She leaned over the railing and let her tears drip down into the brook. She would at best have liked to throw herself over the edge. The water rushed along merrily, over on the other side she heard a new prelude; she did not want to listen any more and quickly turned around and walked back to the city in the dark.

After an unspeakably painful night, at the first signs of sunrise, she arrived at a decision that finally delivered her from her soul's exhaustion. She readied everything for her departure, not at all certain of her destination. Only after she had made her decision final by informing her students with a written announcement did she consult the music journals for reports from various cities and choose, as her new place of residence, a city where above all classical music was cultivated. The difficult journey to Waldheim could not be avoided. She first said her goodbyes to Frau Werl, who, accepting Ida's decision, was kindhearted enough to allow her to leave without this time ridiculing her. She shared with Ida only her worry that, without any references, it would be difficult for her to find success in a strange city, in comparison to the present location. This seemed immaterial to Ida, thinking to herself: "What does it matter to a person who must endure the difficulties of life, when life itself is only a tiresome habit."

The longing to see Selvar one more time made her forget that it would be the last time. He and his sister were alone when she came, although they were expecting guests. Ida wanted to avoid encountering any more new faces after she had, in her opinion, looked with steady gaze upon the most beautiful face on earth and had engraved it forever into her memory. She briefly told them why she had come, which aroused in her friends the greatest astonishment. They declared her decision to be rushed and completely unreasonable, they refused to believe that she was serious and demanded a reasonable explanation. The true reason she could not mention, and she did not want to lie, and so she answered only by expressing her thanks for the truly good things they had done for her, and then she tore herself away in almost impetuous haste.

When early the next morning Selvar inquired at her lodgings about her whereabouts, he was told that she had already departed yesterday before night's fall. "She was a peculiar girl," he mused, "a little more level-headedness would have served her well, but this time she did not actually resort to doing anything unseemly, even though she could not submit to her place in society."

During late summer Selvar's sister and Frau Werl met each other purely by chance, while out walking. Almost in unison one asked the other: "Have you not yet heard any news from our friend Ida?"

The countess had often quietly harbored apprehension about Ida's state of mind; Frau Werl, on the other hand, feared more about Ida's external situation and spoke at length about this with the elegant lady, for whom the word hardship had not yet even entered her mind. Disturbed by such a possibility, the countess went back home and urged her brother to make inquiries as to Ida's fate. He remembered that a young musician who had formerly been his daughter's teacher now held a position with an orchestra in Ida's present city of residence, and he wrote this young man with the request that he visit the young performer and then report back to him news of how she was faring.

* * *

Sohling the young concertmaster was with a few colleagues, who were sitting in a public garden, engaged in conversation about their life's affairs. One of them, who was also a piano teacher, told anecdotes about his pupils, who were all girls: "So recently, the baroness had compelled me to attend one of her musical soirées where I played a few of

Chopin's etudes.[34] 'Do bring me those etudes tomorrow,' she said, 'I want to play them too.' I candidly replied without hesitation. 'They are too difficult, Baroness. It would be impossible for you to play them.' But she insisted on playing Number 11 in E flat major, the one with the inhumanly wide reaches.[35] As she now with death-defying stubbornness choked off one incorrect chord after another, I listened in silent desperation. Unabashed, she called on me to correct her. So I began with the very next bar to criticize her every note, because there was not one clean one to be heard. Then quite calmly, she said, 'Go on, go on.' And so she alternated between: 'Oh dear, do help me and tell me where I have gone wrong!' and: 'Go on, go on!' When the piece had ended, her husband, who had been sitting there listening, said, with a shake of his head, "Mais c'est un diable de compositeur, ce Chopin là!" [36]

"If only I could comprehend," Sohling asked, "how this lady managed to convince non-musical people to believe that she had a reputation as a music expert?"

"Well," the first gentleman replied, "her reputation is believable only to those people at the top who have never heard her play. She is amazingly audacious in passing judgment."

"Unfortunately she fails to impress anyone who's an expert," Sohling said, "for as long as anyone can remember she has been able to utter only two phrases. If a singer is praised, the baroness then says, 'it is such a pity that she has no concept of portamento.'[37] And if a good pianist is mentioned, she then throws in: 'How can one find his playing beautiful, he has such a poor touch.' In the opposite case, when a novice makes an appearance on stage, the baroness says: 'Granted, she doesn't know much yet, but she has natural portamento, which one often does not find even in a famous singer.' Or she will say, 'Perhaps one desires to criticize this pianist in any way one likes, but I find that he possesses a sensitive touch, and that is the main thing.'"

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[34] Frédéric Chopin (1810–1849), was a Polish composer and piano virtuoso, the majority of his compositions being for solo piano.

[35] Etude No. 11 in E flat major, Op.10, No.11 (1829) by Chopin.

[36] English translation: "But that Chopin is a devil of a composer isn't he?"

"I too experienced a prime example of the female version of artistic judgment today," a third gentleman reported. "I teach a little English girl who previously had learned nothing but waltzes. So of course I brought a manual of exercises and etudes as a substitute, and that made the little girl complain bitterly to her mother that the new teacher was making her play a whole lot of ugly pieces. When I then proceeded to play one of these correctly, the mother consoled her by saying – and here I shall try to reproduce her English: 'Look, my dear child, the most ugly piece is turned in a fine piece when it is well practiced.' When I arrived for her lesson today, I found the entire family assembled around this newest piece, and the mother called out to me from the piano that this was indeed a really horrid, ugly piece and that the poor creature must not be expected to learn it. They had all tried it, and the oldest daughters, who were considered to be the virtuosos in the home, had also found it to be most ugly. I sat down and began to play the etude, which had very natural, pleasant-sounding, melodious chords, at which point a piercing shout from the mother and all three daughters interrupted me: "The treble key, the treble key, oh dear, the treble, key!" The old gentleman approached, looked at the score and shook with laughter, all the while repeating in the deepest bass voice: "O ho, the treble key, ho, ho, ho, the treble key!" Accompanying the old man's rumbling words, the giggles of the women rang out like the figured counterpoint of the first violin to the *Cantus firmus* of the bass tuba;[38] they did not tire of calling out to one another: "The treble key, of course, the treble key!" I stood there, thinking I had ended up in a madhouse and could not comprehend what was going on, until one of them explained that the sign that we in German call the "violin key" ("Violinschlüssel") was called the "treble key" in English and that they had all overlooked the fact that, in this piece, this notation was also designed to be played with the left hand.[39] Of course, the result of this was that they had produced a downright hellish harmony."

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[37] *Portamento*, from the Italian for "carrying," is a musical term denoting a vocal technique in which the singer connects two notes by gliding smoothly from one to the other and sounding all notes falling in between.

Another said: "We laugh about such stupidities, but the truth remains that a piano teacher is a tormented creature. The beginner pupils of stringed or wind instruments can produce only one single sound incorrectly, whereas a pupil studying the piano immediately produces a whole handful of dissonances. One feels ashamed at being forced to endure such an abuse of one's ears for the sake of what the Philistines call an existence."[40]

"And this rage that has now infiltrated Satan's amateurs to play the piano and only the piano!" a harpist exclaimed. "All piano teachers prosper financially in this city, whereas I would have to hang my harp on the willows of Babylon, if it were not called out of hiding and brought back into the light by the orchestra every now and then!"[41]

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[38] *Cantus firmus* is a Latin term used to denote an existing melody which is used as the foundation for a new polyphonic composition. Polyphony describes music that is a simultaneous combination of several different melodic lines.

[39] Reference is made in the original text to the "violin key" – a direct translation of the German term, "Violinschlüssel," which at that time was the term for "treble clef."

[40] The German term, "Philister" was initially used to designate all non-academics in the German university towns, this meaning first surfacing in the late seventeenth century in Jena. Both the German term and its modern English meaning have a negative connotation. The modern English meaning most often denotes an individual who fails to appreciate and has little understanding of the arts and cultural aesthetics.

"One cannot claim that it is so easy for piano teachers to be successful here," the first speaker objected. "As a new arrival I had to dip into my savings and finally, for a ridiculously low wage, sacrifice my valuable time until I had made my mark, and then things went well. No one wants to try a teacher who has not yet proved himself, and they always say: we must wait and see if his method is successful. The local old masters, even when they are known to just sit there idly by their students, are considered far more trustworthy than the young teacher who is still self-motivated. And yet, as a rule, the latter are the most enthusiastic and conscientious teachers."

"Do you think Fräulein Ida Fernhofer, whose laconic ad in the *Intelligenzblatt* we all had such a laugh over, has found any students?" the Chopin player asked.[42]

"In that regard I have not heard anything further," the former gentleman answered. "How pretentious it is for a totally unknown girl from an obscure little town, who studied under an unknown teacher, to come here, of all places, in order to teach."

Sohling sat up and took notice, exclaiming: "Imagine, today I received a letter from my old patron, Selvar, who highly recommends this Ida Fernhofer as being a genius. Actually, I am reluctant to take on the sponsorship of a vain, limelight-seeking virtuoso, but I guess I must go there since I am obligated to the Selvars from the past. Do any of you know where the girl lives?"

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[41] Reference to "the willows of Babylon" is specifically found in the *Bible*, in Psalms 137: 1–6, and speaks of the recurring deportation and exile of the Jews to Babylon, recorded in the books of Daniel, Jeremiah, and II Kings.

[42] *Intelligenzblatt* is the name of a local newspaper.

The Chopin player answered, "I would not have even thought about this individual if I had not by chance read about her again today." That said, he pulled from his pocket an old *Intelligenzblatt* in which he had wrapped cigars and handed it to Sohling, pointing out Ida's address.

She lived in a remote corner of the city. When Sohling got there, he was directed to go through two courtyards and past the outbuildings to a small summer cottage, located in the middle of a large lawn area used for bleaching cloth. An old washer woman with a young girl helping her was at work there, and seeing the buckets and drying racks that were standing about in the little house, the concert master had cause to doubt that a fellow artist would even live here. Thinking that he had made a mistake regarding the name, he was just about to leave when he heard a few powerful chords, improvised as an introduction to a tocaata by Scarlatti, coming from a superb instrument.[43] He stood still, listening, and found the performance of this very eminent musical work to be completely flawless. As soon as the music had ended, he stepped into the house and found Ida in a room with a low ceiling, its windows darkened by a vine growing near the house. The room contained only the most meager of furnishings and fixtures, and the whitewashed walls stood in marked contrast to the magnificent grand piano. The occupant looked as if she were suffering and neglected and seemed at first glance to be nothing less than attractive.

As soon as the concert master mentioned Selvar's name, a fever-like red flush spread over her cheeks, and she was so embarrassed that he was at a loss how to continue the conversation. He thought a discussion about their mutual interest would surely be the way. He asked what pieces by Mendelssohn or Chopin she played?[44] She had never played a note written by either. The operas by Spohr, Weber, Spontini were all foreign to her.[45] Her place of birth did not have a theatre, and in the imperial residence only the most modern pieces were performed. Using piano excerpts, she had studied what for at least half a generation was considered unsurpassable. The latest opera with which she was familiar was *Fidelio*.[46]

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[43] Domenico Scarlatti (1685–1757) was an Italian composer and harpsichordist who spent the latter years of his life living in Spain in the service of the Spanish royal house.

Sohling leafed through the music that was lying around and found all top-ranking names, but only up to a certain point in time. Of the living, there was not one.

"What fullness of pleasure still awaits you," he said, "when you learn the splendid music composed by our contemporaries. With a foundation such as yours, you will have a much easier time grasping how ably our great masters are carrying on the trail blazed by those immortals of the past."

Ida smiled bitterly: "You would not expect a musical ear that has been nourished by these immortal sounds to delight itself in such ephemeral music."

Sohling gave her an ironic look. She cast down her gaze because she recalled that she had never actually felt that even one of the composers whom he had named to be worthy of a thorough study. He himself had clashed far too often with individuals who held this opinion to be angry at her. At most he smiled a little, as did every educated musician with a widely comprehensive overview, at the narrow-minded arrogance of the small following whom one would most likely be inclined to call the musical pietists. The one half of this group consisted of those who were too lazy to keep pace with the arts. Left behind on a certain level, they stubbornly declared this music to be the grandest because they wanted only to look down grandly upon the present, while desiring never to look up at it humbly. The other half is composed of very young talent who, like Ida, have very little personal experience. These blindly repeat the unchanging opinions of a teacher who has ceased to learn anything since the nineteenth century, or they allow themselves to be dominated by the views of some family patriarch who had enthusiasm for music only when he was young and who now sensed apathy in the spirit of this new age rather than in himself.

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[44] Felix Mendelssohn (1809–1847) was a famous German composer, pianist, and conductor, perhaps best known for his ever-popular *Wedding March*, still a present-day wedding classic.

[45] Ludwig Spohr (1784–1859) was a prolific German composer, as well as violinist and conductor. Gaspare Spontini (1774–1851) was an Italian opera composer and conductor, and was appointed court composer to Empress Josephine in 1805, staying until 1820, whereupon he left for Berlin.

[46] *Fidelio* is a three-act opera composed by Beethoven, first produced in Vienna in 1805.

Convinced that this artistic viewpoint, like an obsession, is very difficult and slow to remedy, Sohling abandoned the topic and asked: "Have you already had success acquiring pupils?"

In response to Ida's answer to the contrary, he continued: "The remote location of your rooms could be to blame for that. Artists like us are unfortunately dependent for our income on the patronage of high society, and we must obey their demands, even if we should think these to be only prejudices. Were you to live in the city in a house more elegant –"

"That is how I had started out," Ida interrupted, "but I was lacking at that time the energy required to take the first steps into society. I always stayed at home and had no desire to seek out a patron. After several months of waiting in vain, I saw the need to reduce my expenses, and so I took lodgings with my washerwoman."

Sohling reflected on this for a moment and said: "If you would consider placing your trust in me, I could arrange for more suitable accommodations and suitable work."

Ida said nothing in response. She felt ashamed to admit that she had cashed her last gold piece that very day. Now her only remaining prospect was to pawn her loyal Erard piano, leaving then only the solace that an adolescent youth finds so easy and natural after a lost love, namely that death is the best way out of a situation in which one sees no flower-strewn path ahead. Yet on that point too, nature in its infinite wisdom has seen to it that necessity binds a person to a life at once cherished and despised.

Sohling did not continue to press the peculiar girl, who aroused in him more curious interest rather than affection. He asked for Ida's permission to return just as soon as he had finalized an acceptable proposal regarding accommodations for her.

He immediately turned to one of his friends, a painter who was living alone after the recent death of her sister, with the request that she might take the young musician into her care. She was willing, and obligingly called on the stranger. Ida's inherent shyness about accepting any favors of a material nature and her conscious awareness of her gloomy mood made her refuse the offer for some time, but she finally agreed to accept when Sohling suggested that her presence could have the positive effect of bringing cheer to her new friend and helping the painter put the difficult, initial period of loss behind her. In this regard Ida was completely at home because, like the night, she had the effect of being frightening to the cheery but lovely and gently comforting to those suffering.

Ida's new friends introduced her in particular to those families who shared her exclusive taste or who at least gave the appearance of being considered excessively refined connoisseurs. For a few of them she was indeed not yet orthodox enough because, besides Bach and Handel, she also revered Mozart and Beethoven; but most of them adored her because, with unfailing courtesy, she played from memory the entire classical literature of music from the previous century. In addition, Ida also became somewhat acquainted with the hypocrisy of this societal class, with its tendency to cleave merely to the names of its idols without having grasped their spirit. On a mischievous impulse she played a trick on an old professor who made a show of his great contempt for Beethoven and who had personally known Beethoven before he became famous. Ida played for him melodies from a little known opera by his revered Handel, but under the guise of being by Beethoven, as well as then doing the very reverse, and that old scholar declared the first to be an arch-romantic haze, while proclaiming of the other piece: "only Handel can compose like that!"

As she told Sohling of her mischief, he dryly replied, "One could play the same trick on you by playing individual parts from good, newer works in the guise of Mozart and Beethoven."

When Ida opined that that would be impossible, Sohling immediately threatened to put her to the test. The painter objected to this, suggesting that it would surely be better to try the different test of determining whether Ida was less prejudiced than the professor, and she suggested that Sohling acquaint Ida with some good, new compositions without disguising the composers' names. Ida promised that she would not shut herself off from what was beautiful and that she would assess it with honesty before she rejected it.

Her confidence had wavered somewhat on that day when Sohling supplied her with old reviews from the days when Mozart and Beethoven were still young men. They accused both composers of lacking thoroughness, of eccentricity, and of forced and incongruous originality; yes, even the charming, clear-as-day Mozart was viewed to have taken pleasure in his earsplitting, tasteless, frequent dissonances, and deceased, lesser composers were held up as excellent examples of a simple, classical style.

"Isn't reading those old reviews a lot like reading a Beethoven fanatic of our time attacking the living composers?" Sohling asked, while Ida stared in amazement at that yellowed, faded newspaper. She was of the opinion that the difference was only that the Beethoven fanatic was more justified, and she asked Sohling if he could name even one living composer whom he could place on the same level with those masters who alone are singled out for reverence by their small following.

Sohling replied that he had not the least intention of denying that the group of six – Bach, Handel, Gluck, Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven – had until now achieved highest perfection and that in their compositions the vast majority of what is excellent far outweighed the insignificant. "However," he added, "this concession does not exclude the fact that at certain points they could be surpassed by others. I find it quite in order that you hold *Don Juan* in higher regard than for instance *Oberon*;[47] but I find it ridiculous when you take your piety to the point that you endlessly study the bravura arias of Constanze or the Queen of the Night[48] and yet in the same respect scorn the role of Rezia[49] as meriting even a glance. Do you not consider it to be your sacred duty to know all the variations by Beethoven, even those completely intolerable ones – and please don't faint now when I go on to say – on *God Save the King*, while all the while regarding Mendelssohn's *Songs without Words* to be trivial and meaningless entertainment?[50] The tasteless, comical pieces such as Bach's *Coffee Cantata*[51] and Mozart's comic vocal trio, *Liebes Mandel, wo ist's Bandel*,[52] you find to be heartwarming, touching relics. Fine, so be it, but if a living composer had been so naïve as to have had something similar published, you would think: that piece alone serves as sufficient evidence to judge the entire man accurately, and you would not ever open another music book bearing that particular name on its cover."

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[47] *Don Juan*, the notorious seducer of women and central character in countless plays, novels, and poems, as well as Mozart's two-act opera, *Don Giovanni*, first produced in Prague in 1787. *Oberon* or *The Elf King's Oath* is the title of Carl Maria von Weber's romantic opera in three acts, first produced in London in 1826.

Ida laughed: "That is just the same as if you would want to accuse a great man for having once made a dull, flat joke while enjoying a glass of wine."

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[48] Constanze refers to the soprano role in Mozart's comic opera in three acts, *Die Entführung aus dem Serail* (*The Abduction from the Seraglio*) first produced in Vienna in 1782 and the Queen of the Night refers to the soprano role in Mozart's two-act opera, *Die Zauberflöte*, in English, *The Magic Flute*, which he composed in 1791, and which premiered in Vienna in 1791.

[49] This is one of the soprano roles in Weber's opera, *Oberon*.

[50] Reference is made to Beethoven's series of seven piano variations to the motif of *God Save the King*, WoO.78 (1802–1803). Mendelssohn's *Songs without Words*, in German entitled, *Lieder ohne Worte*, are a collection of forty-eight solo piano pieces composed throughout the course of Mendelssohn's life that enjoyed enormous success at the time.

[51] This secular cantata, referred to here by its popular name, and entitled, *Schweigt stille, plaudert nicht* in German (English translation – "Be quiet, don't prattle"), was written for soloists and orchestra, ca. 1734–35, and tells the story of a burgher's daughter Lieschen, who has an addiction to coffee, which her father is desperate to break her of. In the original text Kinkel refers to the cantata as *Liesel und den Coffee*, which is quite possibly the result of careless editing.

[52] English translation: Dear little husband, where's the ribbon?" This is a reference to Mozart's vocal trio for soprano, tenor, bass, and orchestra, K. 441, composed in 1783, which Thayer mistakenly translates as "Beloved Mandel where is Bandel," leaving the reader with the impression that reference is being made to proper nouns.

"Not so: but I would denounce his admirers if they made a prophetic oracle out of that great man's dull joke and continued to propagate such chatter for an entire century and elevate it above the wisdom of all others. The great masters help us forward only in so far as we understand them and judge them fairly and correctly in the light of both their shortcomings and their merits. Yet their blind and ignorant admirers are the ones who, even if they do not kill all artistic development, still hinder it and slow it down. Even beyond Mozart's operas, giant strides towards something better and grander are possible, even though they have yet to be achieved. Yet recent attempts indicate that a new direction has been correctly discerned. I will accept that *Don Juan* and *Figaro* are the exceptions.[53] There is nothing in these operas for me to dare make the outrageous assertion that another composer would have achieved greater success in their creation. Yet his other operas all contain weak spots, and certain sections are by far surpassed when compared to similar operas by Spohr and Weber."

He sat down at the piano and played the short soldiers' chorus from *Cosi fan tutte*,[54] the voyagers' chorus from *Idomeneo,*[55] and asked Ida to judge fairly and truthfully whether the soldier's chorus from *Jessonda* was not more noble and animated.[56] She had to admit he was right. He continued on and asked her to compare the songs of the three little boys from *The Magic Flute* with the similar chorus of the elves from *Oberon*. In colorful succession he presented her with church music by Mozart and Haydn and other works by Mendelssohn. He grouped together the best of Spontini with similar material by Gluck, and at the very least Ida did have to admit that one could endure hearing the two together. Until late into the evening, the two ladies did not tire of listening to the classical examples that he rolled out before them, and after he had left Ida sat down to play once again the loveliest of these melodies from memory.

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[53] *Figaro* refers in brief to Mozart's opera in four acts, *Le Nozze di Figaro*, (English: "The Marriage of Figaro"), first produced in Vienna in 1786.

[54] Mozart's comic opera in two acts first produced in Vienna in 1790.

[55] *Idomeneo,rè di Creta*, (English: "Idomeneo, King of Crete"), an opera in three acts by Mozart.

[56] *Jessonda*, is an opera in three acts, written in 1823 by German composer Ludwig Spohr.

An obdurate amateur can, if need be, eke out a life's existence by focusing on six composers. Yet even though it might focus only on the most select and exclusive music, the soul of a person who lives and breathes constantly in the realm of tones will ultimately have exhausted the enjoyment of it. The thirst for the new and unknown comes alive, and it by itself ensures that a music lover who has learned from the best in the field will of her own accord see to eliminating the false, the mundane from the new music. Only what is noble, what is worthy to follow the former great music will appeal to her.

Ida's mind was too lucid, her soul opened too fully towards embracing the beautiful, not to soon let herself be convinced by the more experienced artist that the spirit of musical art did not descend upon a few select heads within the space of a short period of time so as to shine like an unchanging constellation over an endless night, but rather that this spirit was poured out throughout the ages like a firestorm, here like a flame, there as a faintly glowing spark, and that wherever this pure light appears it ignites and radiates and therefore should not be extinguished and crushed.

"But surely you reject the modern-day Italians and their imitators?" Ida asked during her next get-together with Sohling.

"Yes, because they represent the lie found in the arts. But for that very same reason I also negate the aria of Sextus,[57] where the loveliest rondo carries a text full of "despair and hellish agony." Yet if we take the music apart from the text, its charming combination of melody, harmony and rhythm placates us, whereas the Italians possess little more than a poor, tawdry little melody. Our flautist compares them with a thin soup where only a few globules of fat grace the surface."

The painter said: "That is an accurate but rather nasty comparison. If anything, one should describe the melody of the Italians as a coquette who conducts a trivial conversation with herself, whereas our German music more like the conversation of a cultured society, lets all voices take part."

Several times a week the two ladies and the concert master attended gatherings at which a group of musicians would play and then discuss musical compositions. Ida's agile intellect, which developed more and more as she shed her prejudices, was very attractive to Sohling. Her witty mood returned, albeit somewhat subdued because of her secret pain. Yet this was more to her advantage, because her excessive natural excitability needed some moderation. By and by, as her soul found rest, her appearance began to glow again, and she had to admit to herself that she was no longer miserable, despite her refusal, with the willful "consistency" of her age, ever to be happy again.

The painter, who was a highly educated lady, soon realized that Ida was rather lacking in knowledge in every area other than music. Ida's questions, when she was taken along to the art gallery or when she was exposed to an important book, indicated to the painter how little Ida had actually read and how she had never paid any attention to the real outer world, because she was always preoccupied with the inner world of listening to music. She could have passed by a remarkable building or a statue a hundred times over without having been able to retain in her memory a clear picture of the particular details of either.

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[57] One of the mezzo-soprano roles in Mozart's Italian opera in two acts, *La Clemenza di Tito* (English: "The Clemency of Titus"), first produced in Prague in 1791.

During a conversation with Ida, the painter was praising in particular the fact that Sohling was not, like most of his artistic friends, a so-called rigidly orthodox musical expert. She went on, "Because of this, one learns so much from him, because to the layperson he does not just make his field of expertise understandable on a purely technical level like most others, but rather, because of his broad education, he has a thousand analogies at his disposal, in order to capture people at the point where their capacity for understanding is most open to enlightenment. If, for instance, you knew as much about classical antiquity as he, then you would be much more capable of revealing your Gluck to a layperson in the proper light. No educated man who has read Sophocles would continue to indulge in his penchant for inferior opera music, if you were to perform for him a dramatic piece in the musical arts that is as eternal and true as was the Greek."

While at an exhibition, the painter paused, charmed by a brilliantly composed painting from an earlier period that Ida for her part found to be boring and gloomy because of its faded and darkened coloration, and she by far preferred a painting of an aristocratic young boy done in the earlier style of the Düsseldorf School.[58] Teasing Ida, the painter said, "And you feel offended that a musically ignorant person would rather listen to Donizetti than Sebastian Bach! Here in these two paintings you have the spirit of both, as each would be revealed in colors."

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[58] A reference to the Düsseldorf School of painting established in 1767, and directed by the German painter, Wilhelm von Schadow (1788–1862).

A year in this environment was sufficient to incite in Ida the most intense urge to learn. She made it her duty not to devote one single hour more to earning her livelihood than she needed to be able to purchase the bare necessities. All her spare time she diligently spent on furthering her education. She entered into the hallowed realm of the great poets of her fatherland, and by learning how to differentiate clearly the genres found in literature (the realm of words), she came to understand at the same time how to judge and recognize musical lyrics and the epic aspects of the symphony. She opened her mind to colors and forms, and as her soul expanded while she studied the history of the nations, so too did her imagination awaken to a new life as she learned their poetry and sagas.

Sohling now became just as intensely enlivened by their mutual exchange of ideas, and through her insight he learned new perspectives, much as she had once learned from him. Hers was the company that attracted him most, even though his heart felt not the least bit of passion for her. He did not fall into that dreamy mood that so favors falling in love. Her mind was too animated to allow any young man that moment of boredom to ponder the thought: "There you are, late in the evening, alone with the pretty blossoming girl."

Many times dusk would fall without either of them even noticing, and instead of lamplight the moon and the stars lit the room. The blooming linden trees outside in the square wafted their fragrant scent upwards into the room, and the splashing fountain sounded quite charming. Nevertheless, no tender inclination found any room to bridge the gap between these two hearts. No moment of silence ever occurred; they always had plenty of things yet to talk about when they parted. Their frequent get-togethers had long caused them to dispense with the stiff formalities of north German standards of communication; their relationship resembled that of two friends of the same gender who openly shared everything with one another, even affairs of the heart.

Sohling had often wondered about how she would abruptly break off the conversation whenever he reminded her of the Selvars. He now remembered how she was moved when he first visited and her shy refusal to include a letter of her own in his letter to Selvar. Later on he did indeed perceive that a sorrow of the heart was in play, yet since he never discerned the truth of who or what was involved, but believed instead, like all young men – even those who were not so vain – that only a man of twenty to thirty could possibly pose a danger to a young girl, he had always spoken of "the old count" and related anecdotes about him that he considered to be completely harmless, although for his listener they tore open the scarred wounds of her heart.

On one such occasion, when Ida could no longer conceal her tears, she confided in the young man. Like a raging volcano, her heart opened up and the stream of her intense pain spread like lava across the quiet garden scene of the life and pursuits that Sohling in his mind's eye had painted of her life.

He did not understand this love for a reserved and greying man, yet he was intrigued by the power and genuineness of how she expressed it, since he had never encountered anything quite like it among the reticent hearts of ladies in the city. The next day, Ida did feel embarrassed for having betrayed her heart's secret, yet that was outweighed by the secret pleasure at having finally found a person with whom she could speak of "him," a person who had also once lived in Selvar's charming presence. She made efforts to preserve her memories from inevitably fading away, a fate that ultimately befalls every love that resides mainly in fantasy and lacks fresh sustenance.

Sohling had a similar dark spot in his past, and he reciprocated Ida's trust by revealing it to her. He had loved a beautiful, aristocratic pupil who with her marvelous voice possessed real talent. Just returned home from a Paris boarding school, the coquettish young girl fancied performing for her voice teacher a preview of the role she hoped to play that coming winter at court. Her mama had found it not at all amiss that her little one gain practice receiving the attention and flattery given her by so harmless an individual, so that she would not appear awkward and embarrassed when a soon-anticipated, more serious relationship might rise on the horizon.

Sohling had for a long time believed to be this young soul's first love; with bitter denial he restrained himself, knowing full well the hopelessness of their mutual desires. Then the cunning young thing knew how to tempt him with seemingly innocent enough questions into a new outburst of his secret longings until finally the fondness of the young lady and the unconcerned look of the mother deceived him into believing that the possibility of his desire being fulfilled existed after all. After continuing to tease him for several more months, the ignorant young girl married a rich old bachelor whose ugliness was surpassed only by his stupidity.

Sohling was not so weak in character as to continue to love her; his heart cooled off so suddenly that for several years he continued on in his life, not allowing it to open up to love once again.

The two artists calmly walked on their life's journey side by side, feeling fully secure; he in the conviction that he had become too complacent to ever fall in love again; she in the belief that the eternal sorrow over Selvar was the magic spell that surrounded her heart with a triple layer of armor. At the same time, neither of the two noticed how an evening spent in the company of others, even amidst rich intellectual pleasures, seemed by far emptier and more meaningless than a quiet evening spent together in the home of their friend, the painter. If Ida was not involved in a concert, he conducted with only half his usual zeal; if she had waited in vain for him to come at the accustomed hour on one of his regular visits, she felt put out, and could find no real peace either playing the piano or immersing herself in her books.

A long-cherished dream of Sohling's unexpectedly became a possibility again. A music director whose duties would include directing both a good theater and an excellently trained choral society was sought for a smaller, albeit very culturally rich city. Sohling applied for the position and was successful over many hardly unworthy fellow contenders. He rushed to see Ida and tell her of his happy news, upon hearing which she became pale and very gloomy and pensive. The painter found the right words to express her surprise: she wished him luck, but she sincerely lamented over the unfillable gap that her home would have to endure because of his absence.

Sohling was ashamed that his initial joy had caused him to forget about this completely. His heart was very warm and loyal. He now considered the fact that he would certainly not be spared great pain when he said goodbye. "And this one woman you will miss the most!" a voice inside him said as he looked at Ida, who silently cast down her gaze. She had never appeared to him as lovely as in this quiet, selfless moment of sorrow. His heart pounded anxiously, he sighed and pondered the fact that it was surely a blind, unreasonable fate indeed that did not permit her to love him as passionately as she had Selvar.

His departure had to be hastened. After every fleeting hour that Ida still spent with Sohling, her own state of mind became more puzzling to her. She felt a tension akin to that of an oncoming impending thunderstorm. She was at a loss for words in his presence, and he too seemed inhibited by a crippling sorrow.

The evening of his departure had arrived. "Oh, please sing for me once more one of Beethoven's Scottish songs," he asked. "You already know my favorite one: *Enchantress, farewell!*"[59]

The look with which he gazed into her eyes was one she had never known before. She shuddered as if shrinking back from something strange and frightening. The beloved, familiar melody freed her heart again; this was her friend, her brother, who was parting from her today, it was he to whom she had bared her stormy soul, it was he who had freely granted her the privilege to look into his mild, quiet heart. She began to sing, yet out of the deepest depth of her heart her tears welled up, and when she came to the passage:

> Oh! None but some lover, whose heartstrings are breaking
> The pang that I feel at our parting can know

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[59] *Twenty-five Scottish Songs*, op. 108, by Beethoven. Number 18 is *Enchantress, farewell*, which was composed in 1818 and the text by novelist and poet Sir Walter Scott (1771–1832) from his poem, *Farewell to the Muse*.

her eyes closed, and no further sound would emanate from her burdened breast; she had to break off abruptly and turn her face to the wall. “God, is it possible,” said her heart, “that I love him and no other.”

Sohling sat silently beside her for awhile, and then he stood up and softly said her name. She composed herself and stood up as well, facing him. He wanted to utter the word, that cruel, wretched word: Farewell – but it would not pass his lips. Instinctively he embraced her, she rested her head upon his chest, then one single kiss followed, the two meeting almost unconsciously – she wanted to break free, but he did not allow it, and again and again he embraced her ever more passionately, until, weeping openly, he leaned his head on her shoulder. “I cannot let you go, Ida,” he cried, “I am miserable because I love you; only you and I did not know it.”

She was at a loss for words; in silence she let him weep on, and then she raised him up, looked into his eyes and with the most loving look extended her hand to him.

His departure was postponed for a few more days, for now the solved riddle of their hearts gave them, like children showered in over-rich abundance with Christmas gifts, so much more for their tireless discussions than music once had. For a short period of time, the arts, yes, even the entire world lay forgotten, until finally the sensible painter reminded them that the journey and the furnishing of a home for a married couple would require more careful and thoughtful planning than that for a bachelor. However, fortunately for them, their friend took this worry upon herself; otherwise the two of them, who, in their new surge of passion were not in any state fit for making rational plans concerning their day-to-day lives, would even now still not be living together under one roof.

Ten years had passed since Ida had fled from Waldheim. Count Selvar's sister had long since passed away; he himself, even though not changed in his inclinations, had quite visibly aged in his physical appearance. His daughter and her husband, who was a German-Russian, were required, as a result of the Czar's strict laws, at last to return to their estates in Russia after several unsuccessful petitions for long-term residency in Germany. So Selvar, who did not have any closer female relative who could in turn have taken on the role of hostess for his salon, remained quite lonely within his own home. More frequent traveling was meant to compensate for the solitude that had now taken up residence in the once so lively Waldheim home.

This particular summer even the theater had become boring for Selvar; no new plays were being staged, and no interesting guest actresses wanted to perform here. So he decided to spend a few months visiting his daughter. He stopped for a day's rest from the strains of traveling in a city located in a very lovely region of central Germany, which as the many buildings revealed, was in a phase of substantial growth.

"Is there any theater performance being staged here?" he asked the inn keeper.

"Not today," was the reply, "but a concert is scheduled instead."

"The theater would have appealed to me more than a concert," Selvar replied, "but how am I to spend my evening? Please arrange to have a ticket brought to me."

Having arrived a little late, Selvar found only one vacant place, the furthest from the stage. Glancing at the program he noticed the name Sohling. "Why, that's an old acquaintance of mine," he mumbled, "of course, I once wrote to him regarding poor Ida.

Oh well, I shan't be causing anyone that kind of trouble anymore!" and a small sigh followed this moment of reflection.

The symphony commenced, brilliantly conducted by Sohling. Almost everywhere amongst refined audiences the myth still prevailed that a symphony was not quite considered to be an integral part of a concert, but rather that it only served as a type of introduction to the actual concert. Yes, the ladies often treat the symphony with less attention than they treat the drums in the circus. They find the full orchestra quite suitable to drown out the comments that they whisper to their neighbor about the appearance and apparel of those present.

Yet here the audience appeared to be more cultivated. At Selvar's first attempt to start a conversation with his neighbors while the music was playing – an arch-aristocratic aberration to which he was not immune – he received only a polite gesture instead of an answer, and those standing in front of him turned around to look at him, practically in shock. As Ida made her entry she was received with loud applause by the audience. Even with the help of his lorgnette, he no longer recognized her. The transformation that occurs in those women who from their earliest youth have been hindered in their development by mental stress and an overactive imagination is immense. If at the right time they come into a situation imparting a sense of calm, then a late blooming will work greater miracles than does life's early May-time spring.

With a light preludial touch upon the keys – and as if she wanted to connect those last chords only now dying out with those following – she moved imperceptibly from those still echoing chords into the key of Chopin's enchanting Nocturnes,[60] which she offered her audience for the first time today. Like the quiet tolling of bells from a city submerged below the sea and bathed in the silent glow of sunset as in a fairy tale – do these slumbering melodies magically take hold of the soul in its mysterious depths, as if the voices of the night had magically been enthralled by the music – those voices that seem to call out to us in a secluded wood, or down from the stars, or up from the depths of a lake.

Meanwhile few artists are able to conjure up this magic. The performer who proceeds only to play the music with prosaic sense does not solve the mystery, and confused tones disturb the listener. With every stroke of the keys Ida mastered the art of breathing a delicacy of feeling into the music, allowing here one note to shine, and there another to recede back into the twilight, exactly as a musical picture demands.

It was from this particular manner of touch, revealing as it did the performer's mastery of the strings, showing her ability to breathe into the dead, rigid metal warm life and an eternal, active spirit, that Selvar first recognized her, and once again the vanished dream of days past emerged before him. He never once took his eyes off her, until the silhouette from his memory blended together with her present features. Her fiery eyes had become soft and calm, her sharp features, her once pale cheeks now had blossomed into a soft, mild freshness. She seemed taller having at last shed her habit of a careless posture.

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[60] Nocturnes, a title first used by Irish composer, John Field (1782–1837), were characterized as "night pieces," of which the most famous are Chopin's *21 Nocturnes*.

During the intermission Selvar observed how lively and talkative she was amid the large circle of acquaintances who gathered around her. They were not just the young dandies who usually tended to throng exclusively around the female performers, but rather people of all ages. Even with the women Ida appeared to have a relationship of respect and interest. She herself was animated in her conversation and seemed to be reconciled and satisfied with the world around her.

A new composition by Sohling at the end of the evening's concert called Ida back to the piano once more. The composition was written solely for female voices accompanied by piano and other solo instruments and meant only for accomplished artists. The lyrics were very charming and described the moonlit dance of the elves on the first mayflowers – a dance ultimately overpowered by the awakening sunlight along with the joyful rustling of the forest and the song of the lark. The refinement of the composition and its performance vied with one another to capture the listener's attention. Sweet, lovely young girls arrayed in a semicircle sang the roles of the elves and the larks with bell-like, crystal-clear voices. With barely noticeable nods of her head, and using only her eyes, Ida conducted the choir, which, as Selvar learned from a neighbor in the audience, she had founded herself.

"She has found her place," he thought as he left the auditorium and saw the cheerful farewells that the young singers called out to their conductor. He wavered, not sure if he should go and greet her; however something of a discontent held him back when he saw her beaming with pleasure on Sohling's arm. From the expressions of both, it appeared to him as if each of them ascribed his or her success to the other and as if they were thanking each other with their every breath, while he stood unnoticed apart from her.

Once back at the inn, Selvar opened a window and leaned out into the cool night air. A carriage pulled up in front of the opposite house, and in the bright candlelight he thought he saw Ida's form walk quickly into the entrance hall. Upstairs, several windows were illuminated; he was certain that it was Ida who had gone in, wearing a white and light blue striped, shimmering silk gown, with her pitch black curls framing her face. At this point he could no longer suppress his desire to hear her voice once more.

He sent his calling card over requesting whether he might not still intrude upon them for a short visit so late in the evening. A reply in the affirmative came back, inviting him to visit the artistic couple.

He was received by Sohling and Ida with uninhibited, cordial sincerity and warmth, even though Ida's cheeks became noticeably flushed. Selvar had quickly found the right tone; he feigned the most curious interest in their lives so as not to reveal the feeling of loneliness that came over him when he thought of his own situation at home. However, the conversation was soon interrupted by the faces of two red-cheeked little children, who had appeared, mischievously listening, at the door, and despite the father's stern efforts to send them away, did not want to go to bed until they had received another kiss from their mother. Ida stood up laughing, but even before she reached the door, the curly-haired little rascals dressed in their night gowns rushed up to her and embraced her. When the two little ones were finally calmed down and had shaken hands with the unknown gentleman and innocently asked their papa: "Is that the grandfather who is supposed to be coming for a visit this summer?" the youngest in the adjoining room began to babble and cry out for its mama. If Ida was to have any peace and quiet, she had to take the child up on her lap, where, unconcerned about wrinkling her beautiful silk gown, the child soon fell asleep.

With this picture of her in his mind, Selvar took his leave. She now belonged to a world in which he had no part, "and yet" he quietly said as he stepped over the threshold, "she had once lived only for me!"

When Sohling and Ida were alone once again, she asked, "Were you not at all troubled to encounter the man whom I loved before you?"

Smiling, he kissed her forehead and said: "Should I not be thankful to him for having taught you to love like you do? For the unfettered ardor of your wild heart overwhelmed me, and never would the naïve first love of an immature and undeveloped soul have provided me with such happiness as I have found with you."